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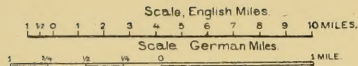
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W. A. Holbrook.
Lt. Col. Cav.

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Feb 23, '55

ST. PRIVAT

GERMAN SOURCES

TRANSLATIONS BY

HARRY BELL

M. S. E., U. S. Army



STAFF COLLEGE PRESS
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P r e f a c e

THE publication of this collection of translations was undertaken in pursuance of the policy of making available in the English language the materials necessary for the intensive study of the history of modern foreign wars for the use of students at the Army Staff College. Nearly all our officers read French and can profit by the extensive publications issued by the Historical Section of the French General Staff. The German sources are however a sealed book to many of our officers. The plan has been therefore to give herein the German side and bibliographical notes to guide the reader to the best books on the French side.

The documents included in this collection were chosen by Captain A. L. Conger with special reference to its use by Staff College students. Captain Conger was unable however to supervise its publication as he was ordered to a Texas maneuver camp at the time the Service Schools were broken up in May, 1914, just as the printing was being begun. That the publication of it was not then given up is due to Mrs. Conger who volunteered to continue the work of editing and checking the translations, so essential in all historical work, adding footnotes and cross-references and doing the proofreading. The printing of such a volume is a severe tax on the limited facilities of the Staff College Press. That it has been possible in addition to the heavy routine demands is owing to the enterprise and efficient management of the press by the Secretary, Captain A. M. Ferguson.

W. A. HOLBROOK,
Lieutenant Colonel, Cavalry,
Director, Staff College.

Army Service Schools,
December, 1914

Table of Contents

	<i>Page</i>
Preface	iii
The Prussian Guard on the 18th of August, 1870; Helmuth	1
Operations of the IId Army; Von der Goltz	45
From My Diary; Von Wittich	83
Military Correspondence of Prince Hohenlohe-Ingelfingen	89
War Diary of the 1st Squadron, Royal Saxon Guard Cavalry; Von Klenck	103
Reflections on Army Matters and the Conduct of War; Von Boguslawski	115
The Initiative of King Albert in the Campaign 1870-71; Von Hodenberg	129
The XIIth Corps in the War of 1870-71 (Chapters VII to XIII); Von Schimpff	151
Extracts from "The 18th of August, 1870;" Great General Staff A German Professional Final Judgment Concerning the Battle of St. Privat; Leipziger Zeitung	215
The 18th of August, 1870; —r	373
The 18th of August, 1870; Von Kretchmar	379
Extracts from Life Recollections of Gustav von Schubert	393
Crown Prince Albert and Prince George of Saxony on August 18th, 1870; Paul Haake	401
Saxons and Prussians at St. Privat; Paul Haake	421
Appendix A, Biographical Notes	467
Appendix B, Bibliographical Notes	473
Index	478
	483

ST. PRIVAT

The Prussian Guard on the 18th of August, 1870 ¹

BY

Captain ARNOLD HELMUTH

Great General Staff

IN the hard fought and bloody battles of the 16th of August the heroic perseverance of 65,000 Germans had resulted in successfully holding up the retreat toward the west of the French main army of more than 125,000 men, and especially in blocking at Vionville one of its three main routes of retreat. Night alone had brought an end to the bitter struggle; under its cover Marshal Bazaine caused his army to begin its withdrawal, placing it in the now world renowned position extending from Roncourt through St. Privat and Amanvillers to the Mosel. The general opinion held in the French army was that it had been engaged today with at least an equal enemy, and that tomorrow it would have before it a superior one. Marshal Bazaine saw that his own troops were so exhausted by the recent battles, and that the general condition as regards morale was so shaken that he had to consider a march directly past the German front impossible of execution for the time being; furthermore he believed himself able to withstand a renewed German attack only in a position which, according to his view, was impregnable. It was his idea that should its leaders decide on the attack the German army would go to pieces on it; and then, through the debris of that army, he believed the road would be opened to any desired point.

Should, however, the Germans decline to attack this strong position, they could then not continue their further advance.

¹ A lecture delivered February 22, 1873, before the Scientific Society (*Wissenschaftlicher Verein*) of Berlin.

In contrast to the views of the French marshal, Prince Frederick Charles believed that he would have tomorrow to defend the battlefield, victoriously held today, against a renewed attack and issued orders in the evening calling all the remaining forces at his disposal to the decisive point.

His Majesty the King had arrived and established Royal Headquarters in Pont à Mousson this same day and when the reports from Prince Frederick Charles of the outcome of the battle reached him orders were sent, during the night, to General von Steinmetz to lead his two corps available for this purpose (the 7th and 8th) at daybreak across the Mosel and toward Gravelotte and Rezonville on the right of the Second Army.

On the forenoon of August 17th the concentration of the German armies took place under the eyes of His Majesty and without interference by the enemy and by afternoon seven army corps and three cavalry divisions, or more than 200,000 men, stood shoulder to shoulder on a front extending from Ars in the Mosel valley westward as far as Mars la Tour. The Pomeranian Army Corps and the 1st Cavalry Division, or an additional 35,000 men, were held in readiness to advance on the morrow to the probable field of battle as a timely reserve. For although the enemy, contrary to all expectations, displayed no inclination towards moving to the attack, the German army directorship remained firmly decided on adhering unwaveringly to the offensive. By noon the conviction had been gained that the French army, protected by a rear guard, had taken up a new position to the rear of the one previously held and about one o'clock General von Moltke, on the hill near Flavigny, dictated, in the name of the King, the orders for the 18th of August. The intentions and measures taken by the enemy, up to that time still unknown, were to determine the precise movements. The enemy might either remain definitely in a position supported by Metz, or might, after recuperation, take the road westward.

General von Moltke reckoned with both possibilities. General von Steinmetz was to cover the right flank of the army against Metz with the 7th Army Corps on the Mosel; Prince Frederick Charles, with his five army corps of the II^d

Army, being joined on his right by General Goeben with the 8th Army Corps, was first to proceed in a northerly direction against the road via Doncourt. Should the enemy retreat, he would be struck in the flank and forced to stand and fight; had he definitely fallen back on Metz, an immediate right turn was to be executed by the German armies to attack him.

Of main importance to the German army directorship appeared the objective—long since considered—of forcing the hostile main army in a northerly direction away from its home land.

The Guard occupied the extreme left wing of the great front, west of Mars la Tour, with the Saxons on their left. On the march since five o'clock, they had arrived at their places of bivouac only toward four o'clock. The night before the decision passed quietly, but the bivouacks were astir before break of day and, while the men were preparing for the advance, Prince August of Württemberg received in Mars la Tour the orders of Prince Frederick Charles. In the main battle order the Guard Corps was assigned to a place in the center of the first line; on the right it had the 9th and 8th, on the left the Saxon Corps; the 3d and 10th Corps, which had lost so many men on August 16th, were to follow in reserve. The immediate march objective of the Guard was Doncourt.

Starting at once, the corps reached with its head of column Mars la Tour toward six o'clock. There, however, they met the Saxons who were just then passing in their assigned direction towards Jarny, and a long halt ensued.

The early morning was cool and clear, yet a hot day was to be expected. In order to prepare all hearts for the hard day's work solemn field divine services were held in simple earnestness.

In the meantime General von Pape had already sent out the Guard Hussars and everywhere could be seen even up to the enemy, like flaming signals, these restless red riders of Colonel Hymmen's.

Toward nine o'clock the march was resumed, the 1st Division with the corps artillery leading, preceded by an advance guard under Colonel Erckert; the 2d Division followed

next, then the Cuirassier Brigade. The Uhlan Brigade was reconnoitering along the Maas, the Dragoons were still with the 10th Corps, together with which they had plucked their laurels on the bloody field of Mars la Tour.

The point reached Doncourt about ten o'clock. Already it had become sultry. Detachments were sent to Doncourt to bring water, but since the Guardsmen found the village filled with wounded of friend and foe and since water there, as everywhere else on that plateau, was scarce, they sympathetically went without the only refreshment generally available that day.

In the meantime the King with Royal Headquarters watched from Flavigny the movements of the army and events on the side of the enemy. The impression was gained that Marshal Bazaine intended to hold himself stubbornly in his reconnoitered position with a view to receiving an attack. In accordance with instructions of Royal Headquarters covering this contingency, Prince Frederick Charles, halted at Vionville, at once initiated the great right turn of his army. The Guard received Amanvillers as march objective; on its right marched the 9th Corps on Verneville and La Folie, and on its left the Saxons on Ste. Marie. The first two were intended to attack the enemy in front and on the right flank; the Saxons were given orders to halt for the present at Ste. Marie, but to be in readiness to take up the attack at any moment. The reserve corps followed in a manner corresponding to these new movements.

Thus the entire army now turned into a new front, facing east, the 7th Corps on the Mosel forming the fixed pivot of the turn.

Although only partially on roads, in a confined space, in the immediate vicinity of the enemy, this movement was executed without interruption and with the precision of the most exact hoisting gear. To gain an idea of the masses to be led we should remember that the troops here assembled, not counting the regimental baggage, would occupy a road space of more than seventy miles if marching on a single road.

The Guard Corps started the new advance in two

columns, on the left the 1st Division from Doncourt, on the right the 2d Division from Bruville, both marching on Habonville; thus the former had the shorter route to the objective. The advance guard had barely started when, toward 11.45 o'clock, the thunder of cannon was heard coming from Verneville, indicating that General von Manstein had encountered the enemy there and at once attacked him energetically with his usual and well known decision. In wars of today the thunder of cannon is to a well schooled army, led by generals of experience and decision, the same as was in olden times the sound of the shield struck by the leader, a far sounding, welcome exhortation for the fight, and here also, as on Ossian's heath, activity reigned supreme along the entire plateau down to the Mosel.

And look, heroes full of might
Mount upwards through winding valleys,
Each inspired with the remembrance
Of victory in times that are past!

Just as though the thunder of cannon had been the signal for a preconcerted rendezvous, all troops, down to the far-off patrol, hastened toward the battlefield to join, side by side, their comrades there engaged and to secure for themselves the honor share of participation in the battle. The hard battle now ensuing was to develop in general about as follows: While General Manstein with the 9th Corps attacked the center of the hostile position between Verneville and Amanvillers and became quickly engaged in a very close fight with superior hostile forces, on his right General von Goeben with the 8th Corps, hearing the noise of the battle, hastened on through Gravelotte; on the left Prince August of Württemberg with the Guard hastened to his support through Habonville; farther to the right General von Zastrow with the 7th Corps tenaciously engaged the hostile front, bristling with obstacles, while on the extreme left the Crown Prince of Saxony led the 12th Corps from Ste. Marie alongside the Guard, at the same time sending columns through Auboué to envelop the hostile wing at Roncourt.

Now came hours of heavy battling, hours of desperate

struggle, in which the scales of battle-luck inclined neither to the one nor to the other side, no matter how much blood and bullets were poured into them. But finally, after the sun had stooped low in the heavens, General Fransecky led the 2d Army Corps to Gravelotte under the very eyes of the commander-in-chief. With loyal perseverance which could not be lamed even by the greatest obstacles, the Pomeranians pressed forward to bring support to the troops under General von Steinmetz in the destructive fight round St. Hubert and Point du Jour, which were captured and held. In spite of having, in part at least, started before midnight, of having marched almost continuously and without refreshment for nineteen hours, and in spite of the fact that a series of fatiguing days had preceded these exertions, the Pomeranians threw themselves into the fray with vigorous bravery and like fresh troops. Their hurrahs, rising louder and reaching farther, gave at Royal Headquarters, where the fatherland stood personified and where the day's burden rested the heaviest, the confident pledge that security was now attained against any reverse although such had been possible up to that time. The enemy, on the other hand, who saw new masses inserting themselves wedgelike in the dark line between Moscou and Point du Jour, was made to feel that here, if at all, the indefatigable opponent sought to bring about the decision the following morning as he actually did intend and to do which he had the means. In the center the 9th Corps, although bleeding from thousands upon thousands of wounds, unswervingly held the Bois de la Cusse and its position at Chantrenne. The 3d Corps at Verneville formed its reserve, and with it, reinforced by a Guard brigade, General von Manstein by dark captured the heights of Amanvillers.

Finally, after desperate struggles and raging strife, the Guard, with the Saxons joining in from the north, destroyed the enemy in St. Privat and thus even on this day brought about the glorious decision of the great battle, to participate in which the 10th Corps also had pressed forward from St. Ail.

The sun stood in a cloudless sky at midday when the

Guard felt the pressure of the constantly increasing thunder of cannon urging them to the front. Prince August of Württemberg hastened to Habonville; General von Pape galloped ahead of the advance guard to orient himself as to the terrain and combat situation. The thunder of far more than 100 guns had already become mixed with the rattle of the mitrailleuse, with the reports of the volleys, and with the crackling of the rapid fire from many thousands of infantry rifles. From the heights at Habonville General von Pape viewed the terrain; over yonder on the wall-like ridge, on which St. Privat rises, dominating the terrain on the left, he saw, in the enemy's line, battery joined to battery, throwing their projectiles unerringly into the flank of the 9th Corps. The main question, therefore, on the German side, was one of bringing up quickly artillery to divert the enemy's aim and to occupy the hostile artillery. General von Pape immediately ordered his four batteries to come up; with them appeared on the gallop Lieutenant Colonel Bychelberg, and at 12.45 Captain Dewitz fired the first shot. But since the first position taken south of the railroad did not satisfy Lieutenant Colonel Bychelberg, he went at a gallop down the railroad cut and the ravine opposite, the entire space covered with a hail of bullets, and up the other side into a new position southwest of St. Ail. Ordered up by Prince Hohenlohe, Colonel Scherbening with five batteries of the corps artillery very soon appeared and with surprising rapidity fifty-four guns were in line, to take up in calmness the work against the hostile batteries. By these means, in some measure at least, was the 9th Corps relieved.

The infantry of the advance guard, directed on Ste. Marie by General von Pape, quickly pressed on after the artillery, trotting ahead. The general had perceived that there was no prospect of success in an advance against Amanvillers opposite the strong hostile line which showed no gap, and believed that he saw a better chance for attack farther north. When the first shells exploded in the ranks of the battalions under Colonel Erckert, the colonel caused his men to give a rousing hurrah for the King, proving thereby their battle zeal. The colonel thereupon led the advance

guard into the bottom of the covering ravine towards Ste. Marie, first sending off Major Feldmann with the 1st Battalion of the Guard Fusilier Regiment to occupy Habonville and, at the same time, guard the artillery.

Prince August of Württemberg had already decided to lead his entire army corps alongside the 9th Corps into the battle, and sent information to that effect to General Manstein. The latter, however, who never hesitated a moment, even under the most harrassing circumstances, replied that direct support was not required, but that an attack on St. Privat appeared to be desirable. It is significant that it was regard for the welfare of another which first turned the thoughts of Prince August to the capture of St. Privat. Its white walls, reflecting the sunlight far over the country, attracted, and held continuously, the searching glances of all leaders.

The ridge which served to indicate the hostile position shapes itself into a high knoll just before it falls off toward the north, toward Roncourt, and on this knoll, dominating the entire surrounding country, lies **St. Privat**. Built like a city, with massive houses, almost completely surrounded by high walls, it formed the firmest bulwark of the enemy. The hill itself slopes gently on the west to the ravine leading (north) by Ste. Marie; the entire slope is flat and firm like the floor of a barn; a few flat meadow basins and plowed furrows constitute the only depressions, potato haulms here and there the only sparse cover; there is no real cover; whoever enters that field is absolutely unprotected from the mass fire of the enemy. The fortress like glacis was 3,000 paces broad, and this open glacis an attacker had to traverse. Marshal Canrobert, one of the best in France, held that height with the 6th Corps—35,000 men and 74 guns. On his left at Amanvillers stood General Ladmirault with the 4th Corps, and as General Cissey with one division was also to take a hand directly in the battle about to begin round St. Privat, there were approximately 45,000 men and 100 guns available for the defense of that position. The hostile infantry was armed with a rifle capable of firing 12 rounds per minute; there was plenty of ammunition. By this it may be seen what enor-

mous fire power was at the command of the defender with which to sweep the smooth slope continuously for a distance of 3,000 paces.

The hill to be contested will evidently then be soon encircled by the raging and seething of rolling breakers; nevertheless the leaders, convinced of the necessity, hesitate not a moment but give as the direction, that hill. Into the waves the loyal men throw themselves unhesitatingly and with unreserved devotion, over them, and in the vortices temporarily stopping each rush, flutter the glorious banners carried on high with heroism combined with patriotism, and finally the German field insignia are carried through into the hostile bulwark.

When we see how these men, after long endeavors and struggles, and in spite of distress, suffering and destruction, finally break the road to victory, and when we master our inevitable agitation, we are forced to admire in amazement the majestic force of the idea in all its magnificence which triumphantly manifests its victorious power even over death and destruction.

During the advance on Ste. Marie General Pape saw a hostile detachment hastening towards St. Ail. He immediately sent Major Sanitz with his battalion on that point and the nimble, swift Guard Fusiliers succeeded in gaining the village ahead of the enemy and in driving him back with short rapid fire. Ste. Marie, on the other hand, was found to be held in force and the attack (to be prepared for only, for the present) was, pursuant to orders brought from corps headquarters by General Danneberg, to be made only in conjunction with the Saxons who were expected to come up on the left. General von Pape therefore caused Ste. Marie to be encircled on the south and southwest by the Schmeling Fusilier Battalion and the Jägers, and these troops were soon engaged in a lively fire fight with the hostile skirmishers densely lining the edge of the village and the walls enclosing the fields in its front. This was the French 94th Regiment, which had been advanced to Ste. Marie by Marshal Canrobert. Colonel Erckert caused the the nearest hostile detachment to be driven back by the Fusiliers at the point of the

bayonet; farther to the left the Jägers worked their way with drillground precision and with well aimed fire closer and closer to the enemy. Behind the screen formed by them, extending towards Ste. Marie, General Pape brought up his main body. The regimental bands played the Prussian national air; with colors flying, greeting the exploding shells striking in their ranks with loud hurrahs, this proud mass of 12,000 men entered the battlefield opening before their eyes and soon to open to their deeds. First both brigades took a covered position in readiness; thereafter the 4th Guard Regiment prolonged with its Fusiliers the firing line of the Jägers to the left. In the meantime General von Pape caused his artillery to fire energetically on Ste. Marie and towards three o'clock, the Saxon batteries appeared west of the village whence they could also throw their shells into the place. Thus began combined action on the part of the Guard and the Saxons. Close by on the right stood the Hessian troops belonging to the 9th Corps. Thus the Guard, representing the whole of Prussia (being composed of the sons of all its provinces), the south of Germany on the left, the north on the right, advanced shoulder to shoulder to oppose the common enemy—truly an imposing spectacle of the new era of the German fatherland.

The batteries had now for some time been throwing a heavy rain of shells into Ste. Marie; the village was in flames, houses began to fall, the enveloping walls showed breaches, and the road now stood open to the infantry for the assault. Toward three o'clock General von Pape consulted with the Saxon General of Division Nehrhoff and reached an agreement with him in regard to the charge. General Nehrhoff held the 47th Brigade under General von Leonardi west of the village in readiness for the attack, while on the right of that brigade the Guard battalions impatiently awaited the signal for the assault. A little after three o'clock the signal was given. As soon as the battalions rose up for the assault the rapid fire of the hostile detachments doubled. But without taking time to reply to it the attackers pressed forward at unbroken double time with jubilant hurrahs, and the objective was everywhere reached almost at the same time.

On the left, coming from the west, the 4th Guard Regiment charged alongside the Saxons, on their right the Jägers bought their share of honor with the death of Lieutenant von Gersdorff. The hottest and bloodiest road, however, fell to the lot of the battalions Sanitz and Schmeling of the Guard Fusiliers on the right, for they received, in addition, a destructive mass fire from their right flank from the hostile infantry and artillery farther to the rear.

Hundreds fell killed and wounded, but Colonel Erckert, riding in the lead, gave the direction to the heavy shock, and the battalions reached the village simultaneously with the others. The enemy, already shaken, could not hold out against such a mighty onset. The detachments posted in front of the village were thrown back into it; with them and beyond them the onset continued to the opposite side of the village. Driven out on to their reserves in rear, the beaten garrison left several hundred prisoners in the hands of the impetuous victors. While the Saxons pursued the fleeing enemy to beyond Ste. Marie and become engaged near Roncourt in a very bloody fight with fresh masses, General Pape had the village occupied and now a total of seven Guard battalions stood within and behind it, in readiness directly to defend it. But the enemy, who on the whole was little inclined to take the offensive, made no attack. However, the entire space from St. Privat to within about 800 paces of Ste. Marie was swept with a rain of bullets by the enemy's skirmishers.

Colonel Erckert, conducting the movements just outside the village opposite the enemy, declined to take advantage of any cover, and fell, mortally wounded by a bullet through his head, just after he had received a cheer from his Fusiliers after their first splendid feat of arms. He was a true knightly figure and one of the bravest of heroes, so many of whom were to cover the ground, soaked this day with so much blood.

A continuous rain of bullets from the long range chassapots reached as far as the reserves in rear and added a gruesomeness to the situation of the battalions under General Kessel (1st and 3d Regiments) while they were waiting, kneeling in the open fields southwest of Ste. Marie, for further orders. The bullets rained unceasingly into and alongside of the col-

umn, and by a chance shot Lieutenant von Helldorf was struck in the breast. To honor the young hero, who died soon after, Colonel v. Röder gently closed his eyes, for as yet death could still be appreciated in its full majesty in each individual case. It is a bitter thought that the bullet hastening into space, probably fired by the shaking hand of a weakling, may bring the best hero to the ground, yea it would be a terrible, unbearable mockery of fate, were there not within each brave soldier's heart a comforting voice speaking with convincing assurance that even in the spitting rain of today's mass fire the course of each bullet is guided by Him with whom is each beginning and each end.

After Ste. Marie had been captured, Prince Hohenlohe immediately caused his batteries to take a position more to the front. In advancing intrepidly through the redoubled fire Captains von Dewitz and Niederstetter were mortally wounded and the new position could be gained only under renewed losses. The left wing of this position touched St. Ail; on the right it extended close to the Hessian batteries so that there were now eighty-four guns in a single line. It is true that the dense clouds of powder smoke made difficult aiming at the enemy who was higher up, and that the pieces were finally almost glowing from the hot work; it is true also that the position was under a continuous hail of bullets and shells, but still the work was continued in all calmness and with splendid endurance and regularity. The leaders turned their attention only on the enemy and the object to be attained; the cannon-eers thought only of their guns and the work in hand. Thus we see again on this day artillery acting in unbreakable unison with the infantry; this line of guns proved an unshakable support on this stormtossed battlefield.

The French artillery was unable to cope with such endurance on the part of the German artillery firing with a precision which had already come to be feared; it soon ceased its fire completely and the German batteries fired only occasionally, whenever a target offered. Thus after four o'clock a certain pause occurred in the battle which was marked along the entire front, eight miles long, at the same moment, but which could only signify the calm before the storm.

In obedience to instructions from Prince Frederick Charles, Prince August of Württemberg intended to carry on a delaying action until the enveloping movement of the Saxons, already begun, would make itself felt. Of the 2d Division, which had appeared on the battlefield quite a long time before, the 3d Brigade, Colonel von Knappe, had been detached by Prince Frederick Charles with one battery and two pioneer companies to report for orders to General von Manstein. Prince Frederick Charles intended a general simultaneous attack along the entire front from Amanvillers to St. Privat; but the 9th Corps, whose troops were slowly bleeding to death in the annihilating battle, needed reinforcements for that purpose. General Budritzky led the remainder of the 2d Division to St. Ail at four o'clock, for Prince August wanted to concentrate his forces more closely together for the attack to be undertaken. Toward five o'clock the 4th Brigade, General Berger, deployed at St. Ail; General von Budritzky directed Major Rheinbaben to bring his three batteries into position south of the road and these batteries, paying no attention to the hail of projectiles, were soon engaged calmly and methodically in their work. Thus was five o'clock ushered in. The Saxons had by this time their artillery in a position to the north of Ste. Marie, facing Roncourt; the Leonardi Brigade, which had participated in the assault on Ste. Marie, reassembled after a bloody fight northwest of that village; all remaining troops concentrated at Auboué. From there about five o'clock, Prince George started with the column designated for the enveloping movement toward Montois, General Kraushaar with one brigade brushed the hostile detachments which had gained a foothold therein out of the forest between Auboué and Roncourt. As a matter of fact the interference of the Saxons at Roncourt could not be expected until after six o'clock. The Guard Corps had been notified of the measures taken, but the information, brought verbally in part, gave the Prince the impression that the Saxons would attack directly the right wing of the enemy as early as five o'clock. Prince August saw that on the rest of the front to the right no progress was being made in the battle, that the sun was already sinking low in the heavens,

that only a few hours remained for intelligently directed action, and that anything which had to be done in order to reap the fruits of victory in today's battle must be done quickly. Prince August was certain of the speedy coöperation of the Saxons and he also knew that the sounds of waging battle would serve to bring his neighbors more quickly. After all these reflections Prince August decided about five o'clock to begin the attack and Prince Frederick Charles, to whom he communicated this decision, could not withhold his sanction after hearing stated the reasons which induced the decision.

Thus the orders for the attack were issued shortly after five o'clock. For this attack there were available: at St. Ail 6,000 men under General Berger of the Budritsky Division, at Ste. Marie 16,000 men under General Pape. Since, however, Ste. Marie was important as a point of support and had to be held with a sufficient force to meet all eventualities, there were only immediately available at the start 12,000 men of the 1st Division to be counted on for the attack. There was thus a total of 18,000 men available for attack on this characteristically strong position defended by more than 40,000 men. For only the extreme right wing of General Canrobert could be kept employed at that time by the Saxons. After greeting General Budritsky, and the Berger Brigade just preparing for the attack at St. Ail, Prince August of Württemberg rode over to Ste. Marie to General Pape, and after a brief conference the latter ordered the advance of the 1st Brigade which at that time stood more than a hundred paces southwest of Ste. Marie. But the 4th Brigade was by that time already pressing forward against the enemy on that side, so that its attack was made about a quarter of an hour earlier than that of the Kessel Brigade. At the same time with the 4th Brigade the Hessians of the 9th Corps had advanced on both sides of the railroad, and in turn the Guard Brigade under Colonel Knappe on their right. At Ste. Marie General Pape sent the 2d Guard Regiment into a gap which occurred on the left of the road between the 4th and the 1st Brigade. From that time on raged a desperate battle along the entire ridge from Amanvillers to St. Privat. General Pape prolonged his left wing with the 4th Guard

Regiment, then the Saxons pressed forward alongside and with that wing and the battle then also raged north of St. Privat until finally—just as the sun cast its last rays on this blood-soaked field of contention—the storm flood of German impetuosity broke the last dam of the French and drove them down into the hollow and back towards the fortress which afforded them protection. Deed there joined to deed in forming a costly chain and in the golden book of glory and duty there will be seen by posterity the names of all those heroes who there found their death for the fatherland or who still shine preëminently in the crowds of the brave. There the regiments, battalions and batteries each proved themselves by deeds and by suffering.

In the lofty trial of strength, of fidelity and bravery thus begun the 4th Brigade had the precedence. In the midst of the pouring rain of bullets General Berger caused the Kaiser Franz and Queen Augusta Regiments to deploy immediately east of St. Ail, which they did with drillground and drillbook precision. After deployment the proud line advances to make a simultaneous attack on the designated objective, the ridge south of St. Privat, filled with the enemy's troops. The regimental bands first play the national hymn, but the sounds are lost in the ever increasing heart-rending sounds of battle, and having no arms with which to fight, Bandleader Saro leads his men to perform their efficacious work of charity on the battlefield, already covered with dead and wounded. The hostile guns belch forth in rapid fire with the ammunition saved for that purpose; a hail of fire pours from all along the covered position of the infantry, everywhere are flashes, flames and crackling, even the very ground seems to emit fire.

On the left, in front of the regiment Kaiser Franz, Colonel von Böhn falls mortally wounded; Lieutenant Colonel von Bentivegni, assuming command, gallops to the foremost firing line, soon his horse is killed and he himself wounded. On the right, with the Fusiliers, Major Wittich sinks into death; on the left, with the Grenadiers, Major Linsingen is seriously wounded, his adjutant, Lieutenant von Kalckstein, being killed by his side, but in spite of his serious

wound he remains with the assaulting line. Under the destructive fire nearly all the officers are soon killed or wounded, the ranks of the Fusiliers and Grenadiers become thinner and thinner, but only after having bought with their blood 2,000 paces of ground does the onset slacken. The remainder of the Grenadiers oblique toward the road, seeking cover in the ditches, and a group gathered up by Captains Bardeleben and Cöln opens fire against the covered enemy at a range of about 400 paces. Major Linsingen, unable to walk due to his painful wound, had lain down behind a pile of stones on the road, and with a rifle taken from a dead soldier fired round after round deliberately and with precision. Lieutenant Nordenflycht led a group of Fusiliers, the remnants of the half-battalion of the fallen Captain Bentivegni, up to the Grenadiers and to the road—he being the only officer left of that half-battalion. Farther on the right Captain Siefert had pressed up with the other two Fusilier companies to the hedge road, strongly held by the enemy. Here Adjutant Count Keller reached him with orders for these isolated companies not to advance any farther. His horse having been shot under him at that moment, Count Keller assumed command of the Fusiliers—they having lost almost all their officers.

Thus the Kaiser Franz Regiment stood in two groups on the dearly purchased field of honor south of the road, about 400 paces from the enemy's most advanced line and 900 paces from St. Privat. All the field officers were killed or wounded, only a very few officers were still standing, and the final loss amounted to 38 officers and more than 1,000 men; but in spite of this the remnant of the regiment stuck tight to the fire-swept slope, eyes and guns directed on the enemy, all senses alert on coming events.

On the right with the Queen Augusta Regiment, Colonel Count Waldersee had at the start only two battalions at his disposition, the 2d and the Fusilier; but when Major Rosenberg with the 1st Battalion, which had been detached as a guard for the artillery, saw the other two battalions charging the enemy, he could not remain behind, but followed them into the rain of bullets. Major Seckt, sent with his

battalion by Colonel Knappe to Habonville, also brought up two companies of the Kaiser Alexander Regiment; thus a total of fourteen companies participated in the attack on the ridge. In the center, Count Waldersee personally led the onset with seven Grenadier companies, farther to the right, Captain Falckenstein pressed against the southern foot of the hill with three Grenadier companies. Both officers strike the junction between the corps of Canrobert and the Cisse Division, and here the attempt is pressed to make the first breach in the closed wall-like line of the enemy.

The Grenadiers charge across the field of destruction at a run. Count Waldersee is seriously wounded but remains at the head of his column, Majors Rosenberg and Seckt are hit, everywhere the officers are falling killed or wounded, the companies are disorganized, but the advance never falters. Now, only one more rush with the force remaining, a loud hurrah, and the ridge is gained. The enemy retreats in a dense mass and in haste, but from the other side fresh forces direct their fire over here. To secure possession of the ridge Colonel Waldersee quickly gathers the remnants together; but, his energy being exhausted through loss of blood, he found himself constrained to relinquish command to Major von Beer, the only unwounded field officer left in the Berger Brigade.

On the left of the Grenadiers, Major Prince Salm had led the Fusiliers at a run to the hedge road mentioned above, suffering equally as much as the others. In the stream of hostile bullets Major Prince Salm was killed and, with him, Lieutenant Prince Salm and many brave men. After connection had been gained on the left with the half-battalion under Captain Siesart of the Franz Regiment, Captain Count Keller, already wounded, again pressed forward, but even then was unable to carry this ruinous hostile position.

At that moment, perceiving the predicament of the Fusiliers and paying no attention to his own wound, Captain von Trotha, with a group of Grenadiers from all companies, hastens up to the support of the single standing officer, Lieutenant Helft, and charges the left flank of the enemy. At the same time the Fusiliers again rise up and charge—the two Counts Keller in their front; for fate had brought both

brothers together for combined glorious action, one of them bleeding from a wound which the other hastily dressed. Thus, pressing ahead, they snatch a drum from a falling drummer, beat the charge, and in spite of all their losses Fusiliers and Grenadiers throw themselves with fiery impetus on the enemy. The objective is finally reached and some 200 men are quickly overcome and captured.

Thus had the Berger Brigade fought for and gained a connected front. Of course the entire ridge was swept by a continuous hail of bullets, and in threatening masses the columns of the Cissey Division pressed against the right wing. Their first charge, however, was defeated by rapid fire, ordered by the wounded Captain Falckenstein of the Queen Augusta Regiment and Lieutenant Herzog of the Kaiser Alexander Regiment, but the danger became more and more pressing. However, help now begins to arrive with cheering sounds, guns appear on the ridge, and soon Prussian shells are exploding in the dense hostile columns. Captain Prittwitz, observing the desperate struggle of the decimated companies, brought up his heavy battery at the gallop; several guns were placed out of action by having their horses shot; but the battery was soon firmly established in a position on the storm tossed ridge. A little later an equally audacious decision brought the Friederici and Seeger Batteries up on the ridge farther to the left. In taking this position, Captain Friederici was mortally wounded, but the youthful Lieutenant Schmalz with tenacity held the battery firmly in the position taken against Amanvillers and kept up a hot shell fire on the hostile columns.

Captain Seeger, with his battery, had formed front towards Amanvillers and with deadly accuracy plowed bloody furrows with his shells through the ranks of General Ladmirault's troops. This decided and effective artillery fire was not without good results, for the pressure against the German right wing ceased, and from then on the possession of the ridge was assured. The connection between the French 4th and 6th Corps was nearly broken, the Guard batteries dominated the country to beyond St. Privat, and their

shells already caused anxiety and unrest even among the French reserves in rear.

A brilliant success, which proved very material in the final decision, was gained here in the hot strife and was maintained and though the Queen Augusta Regiment lost nearly 30 officers and 1000 men, the price paid was not too dear. The two companies under Major Seckt of the Kaiser Alexander Regiment paid for their share of the honor 7 officers and 120 men.

In the meantime, toward half after six o'clock, Generals Budritzky and Berger had received the reiterated order from corps headquarters to content themselves with the success thus far attained, and not to advance further until the left wing, for the moment still held back, was ready to advance. Thus the fight came to a standstill here on the ridge south of St. Privat. We will now turn our attention to Ste. Marie and back to the time when the 1st Brigade began its attack.

In silent determination rose those 6000 selected men; they had been picked from the entire country for their excellence and physical might. There could be no doubt as to the fearful earnestness of the task set them, for on their right the battle was then raging in all its fierceness, in front the ridge, which had to be stormed, was covered with hostile masses. On its crest the crowning walls of St. Privat showed here and there through rents in the dense powder smoke. These walls, as well as a number of plain field walls of masonry in front, were densely crowded with hostile sharpshooters, likewise the houses behind from the ground up to the roofs. The enemy fired from five or six lines, one above the other, sweeping the entire slope as far as Ste. Marie. There was on the entire bare slope but a single shallow depression some 800 paces in front of St. Privat, which was formed by the upper third part of the slope being somewhat steeper than the under part.

The brigade had scarcely crossed the road the other side of Ste. Marie before the hostile fire opened with cyclonic fury along the entire line up to St. Privat and from there to Roncourt. The ridge became a veritable volcano from which

the annihilating stream of fire ran down and smothered every living and growing thing; the rattle of more than a thousand rifles joined by the roar of more than 200 guns produced an inferno which caused fear to enter the hearts of even the bravest. Commands could no longer be heard and officers could only direct the men by their example; that is why so many officers fell in such frightfully quick succession.

Six hundred paces north of the road just taken by the Franz Regiment, General Kessel caused a right turn to be executed against St. Privat, and battalion after battalion proceeded up the hill in such manner that the Fusiliers of the 3d Guard Regiment were in the lead, on their left the Grenadiers of the 2d Battalion, on the latter's left in turn the 1st Guard Regiment; the 1st Battalion of the 3d Regiment, on the other hand, as well as two Grenadier companies of the 1st Battalion, 1st Regiment, were sent by General Kessel against Rancourt in order to cover the left flank. The latter force was joined by Captain von Bock with the pioneers and thus all seven companies entered the battle on the right of the Saxons.

Ahead of his Fusiliers of the 3d Regiment Colonel Linsingen rode up the ridge, Major von Motz at his side. The Fusiliers follow them through the rain of bullets at the double time, only halting from time to time to draw breath. Colonel Linsingen and his adjutant were both wounded. Major von Motz fell with his horse which was shot and, while he was attempting to get on his feet, a shell carried away his head; with him fell his adjutant, Lieutenant von Quast. Captain von Rauch, in the firing line, was mortally stricken by three bullets, Lieutenant von Sydow, hastening ahead of his men, by two. Passing over them and other heroes, the battalion was torn to pieces and some 1200 paces from St. Privat the unheard of happened and the charge of the first line came to a halt. Just then Captain Fabeck led up the support, still in close order, and carried forward the thin line anew. Captain Fabeck fell almost immediately, struck by three bullets. Captain von Herwarth, grasping and holding aloft the colors, hastened to the front and led another intrepid rush forward in which he also fell mortally wounded. The

remnants of the companies gathered around the last unwounded officer, Lieutenant von Obernitz. The strength of this brave force was broken by the loss of no less than 14 officers and 450 men.

In the meantime Lieutenant Colonel Holleben had led up the Grenadiers of the 2d Battalion on the left; there also the same heroism encountered similar destruction in the desperate struggle. The commander was killed together with his adjutant, Lieutenant von Gröben; very soon Lieutenant Kracht, bleeding already from one wound, was the only officer remaining in front of the small remnant. Once more he led the Grenadiers forward in the path of glory, when a second bullet brought him to the ground and now the leaderless remnant of the battalion, which had more than 400 men, crowded into the shallow depression above mentioned to gain some protection against the fearful hail of bullets passing over them. Desperately do they cling, however, to this hard contested spot and, when it comes to the last decision, the Grenadiers still feel sufficient strength to snatch a share of the honor.

On their left a similar spirit of determination led the Fusiliers of the 1st Guard Regiment up the same heights. Far in advance of all, examining the terrain, and indicating the direction to be taken, rode Colonel von Röder, one of the bravest of the brave. The battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel Count Finkenstein, on foot because his horse had been shot under him, led up the skirmishers of the battalion to within 600 paces of the foremost hostile line and caused them to open fire. But the enemy, covered to his eyes by breastworks, was a most difficult target, while the Fusiliers found only a delusive protection in the potato field and fell, being without cover, under the mass fire. Count Finkenstein again led them forward, but soon was severely wounded, and when Captain von Geyr also fell, killed by three bullets, the line came to a standstill. Count Schulenburg, however, brought up the support with drums beating, and once more carried the line ahead, until he also was killed; after Lieutenant von Luck, already wounded, shared the same fate, Lieutenants Alvensleben and Bonin vainly

endeavored to assemble the debris. Just then the inspiring beating of drums was heard to the left. It was Captain von Röder, who, riding ahead of the Life company, brought up that and the second company. To accompany his audacious charge, Lieutenant Alvensleben rallies his men, but, struck by seven bullets, he sinks to the blood-soaked ground and, gathered round the last officer, Lieutenant von Bonin, what is left of the Fusiliers occupies a trench abandoned by the enemy. The two Grenadier companies also had suffered heavily from the enemy's fire and Captain von Röder was forced to conclude that for the time, at least, a further advance was out of the question. He caused his men to seek the necessary protection against the continuing hail in the fold in the terrain above mentioned, waiting not in vain for a further opportunity for deeds of heroism.

The other two companies of the battalion had been led by Lieutenant Colonel Oppel in a northerly direction to cover the left flank. But the left wing of this line, directed against St. Privat itself, was overlapped on its immediate left by the overpowerful enemy and would have been annihilated had the enemy made an attack. In order to meet this serious danger with as much force as possible General Kessel had ordered Colonel Röder to have the 2d Battalion form a flank toward the left. But before this was done Lieutenant Colonel von Stülpnagel, in an endeavor to help the endangered battle group under Captain Röder, had led the leading company, the 7th, to the heights of fame and destruction.

In the intrepid advance Lieutenant Colonel Stülpnagel fell and with him Captain Schack, and it was only a small remnant which the adjutant, Count Pückler (all the other officers having been either killed or wounded), led to the assistance of his endangered comrades above on the ridge. Here that small group held its own until the final decision. Further to the left Captain Schütz had in the meantime led the main body of the battalion against Roncourt and directly against the enemy; he fell under the mass fire, to advance in which each step had to be paid for with blood. However, the Grenadiers succeeded in forming a small flank at an

obtuse angle to the front according to orders, beyond which Lieutenants Woyrasch and Brause, the former already wounded, pressed for a short stretch with glorious insistence. This battalion, though disrupted by the loss of twelve officers and almost 400 men, held the spot it had gained. Thus we see that while one and one-half battalions join the Saxons farther to the left, four and one-half battalions of the 1st Brigade hold their perilous position 800 paces from St. Privat with heroic endurance. Destruction takes its course over their heads, a further advance is forbidden by inexorable impossibility, but there is no thought of retreat—truly, this mere perseverance is equal to the most brilliant valorous action. While the brigade was battling for this position General von Pape had also brought the 2d Guard Regiment from Ste. Marie to close up the gap, about 600 paces wide, which had occurred between the 1st and 4th Brigades, so as to prevent the opponent from piercing the already thin line, should he advance against that gap. It was a quarter before seven o'clock when the regiment advanced against St. Privat, the deployed battalions alongside each other, though the Fusiliers on the right were somewhat in rear of the Grenadiers. General von Medem and Colonel Count Kanitz were in the lead. The regiment ascended the fated hill, proudly erect, loud hurrahs mingling with the sharp beating of drums, the ancient colors calling to mind the glorious past and exhorting the battalions following to honor and duty. The slope was flooded by the sun, already low in the heavens, with its rays golden red from the powder smoke and the sharply contrasting dark lines of the enemy became barely visible when the rain of fire opened on the new target with redoubled fury. General Medem and his adjutant were wounded; Colonel Kanitz was seriously wounded; as everywhere else the bullets rapidly thinned the line of officers first of all, but gap upon gap was also torn by the sheaves of projectiles in the ranks of the battalions. Nevertheless, in this proud forward movement there was no staggering, no hesitation—the dead and wounded in their long rows merely served to mark the path of glory thus far trod. In the center, with the 1st Battalion, Lieutenant Colonel von Puttkammer had

been wounded very early, the officers fell one after another; Captain Count Rantzau was struck mortally, Lieutenant von Portatius laid low with five bullets in his body, and soon Count Hessenstein was the only remaining officer, although he also was wounded; all first sergeants and cadets were also put out of action. Finally the heights opposite the right of the 1st Brigade are reached; one more short advance and the last power is broken, and thoroughly exhausted the Grenadiers throw themselves on the slope. The 1st Battalion has purchased its fame with relatively the heaviest loss on this bloody day; besides all officers, first sergeants and cadets it lost more than 500 Grenadiers.* On its left, the 2d Battalion kept the same pace and position; here also the struggle raged; here also the officers fell one after the other—Lieutenants Count Monts, Count Beust, and von Trotha died the death of heroes; the Grenadiers covered the ground by hundreds. Nevertheless Major Görne, reckless and heroic, led his men a distance beyond the general line and thus gained for the battalion the glory of having covered the longest stretch toward the objective at one uninterrupted charge. Even now the power of the Grenadiers was not fully broken, for Lieutenant von Kamptz wanted to keep on with a handful of Grenadiers, but Major Görne, though pleased at such intrepid daring, perceived it to be useless and ordered him to halt. On the right of the 1st Battalion the Fusiliers under Major Passow quickly advanced to the line of the Grenadiers; among others a Count Schwerin met his fate here, and the ground was strewn with ever fresh casualties far and wide. The Fusiliers finally gained the right of the Grenadiers, keeping on their side connection with the remainder of the Kaiser Franz Regiment on the chaussee.

*In the carefully prepared and instructive casualty lists arranged by Dr. Engel, Director of the Bureau of Statistics, the Guard Rifle Battalion is given as the battalion which suffered the heaviest losses on the 18th of August. These lists apparently contradict the above statement, for the reason that in this tabulation the Rifle Battalion appears as an independent battalion and is placed in comparison with other independent battalions and with entire infantry regiments, of which, in fact, none lost relatively as heavily as the Guard Rifle Battalion.

Thus the 2d Guard Regiment, in a very thin line, but with grim determination, stood ready to hold the captured ground. Their sense of comradeship, as well as the tactical structure, proved unbreakable in spite of an ultimate loss of 39 officers and more than 1000 men. General Pape, who had posted himself immediately in rear of the first line on the road, in a position which was under a continuous rain of bullets, saw, like his former commander, with doubled pride that in the 2d Guard Regiment no man retreated a single step.

In the same manner we continually see generals in the foremost lines, forgetting their personal safety, thinking only of their troops, whose enormous losses might make their hearts heavy, but whose achievements and endurance could only fill them with exalting wonderment. Generals von Pape and von Kessel had by this time lost nearly all their staffs; their own horses had been shot under them; Lieutenant Daum had been killed, Lieutenant Schlegel was mortally, Captain Holleben of the General Staff slightly, wounded. Only Lieutenant von Essbeck, a daring rider, who could be seen at all points on the battlefield on his white horse and who was well known by the troops, was not struck by any bullet.

In the meantime Prince Hohenlohe had caused the artillery to advance simultaneously with the infantry more to the front, and when the designated batteries had gained their position on the crest of the ridge, the rest of the batteries stood more than 1000 paces westward beyond St. Ail. Major von Budenbrock had also hastened up to the battlefield in the meantime with two horse batteries attached to the cavalry and gone into position alongside of the batteries on the ridge. These batteries of course gained their position only under heavy loss from the continuous small arms fire. In the advance Captains Mutius and Elern were seriously, Captain Grävenitz slightly wounded, but they never left their batteries.

In the subsequent advance Lieutenant Colonel Bychelberg placed his three remaining batteries on the right of those of Captain Prittwitz and on his own right were the Hessian batteries, so that the artillery in action on this field

then formed two large groups: on the left fifty-four guns firing on St. Privat and Jerusalem, on the right sixty guns firing on the masses under General Ladmirault near Amanvillers and also on that village itself.

While thus on the right wing of the Guard the success so fortunately gained by the 4th Brigade was with equal good fortune held, the situation of the unprotected left wing remained very precarious. The enemy, however, did not hazard any energetic advance from his secure heights against that thin line; his infantry appeared to have entirely forgotten the use of the bayonet. One regiment of Chasseurs, belonging to the Cavalry Division of General du Barail, did ride out from Roncourt against the left wing. The decimated Grenadiers of the 1st Guard Regiment, though without any cover, declined to mass together for protection and calmly awaited the charge; then, at point blank range, they opened a destructive rapid fire, at which the Chasseurs recoiled and then dispersed. On perceiving this Prince Henry of Hesse hastened up with the 2d Guard Uhlans kept in readiness behind Ste. Marie, but his troopers got into the hail of bullets covering the entire field, there was no target to charge, it was impossible to get into any action, and the Uhlans had to be satisfied with having shown a firm will for it.

In order to reinforce the left wing, still in danger, General von Pape at about half after six o'clock ordered Colonel Neumann to proceed there with the 4th Guard Regiment. Colonel Neumann thought it best to take the shortest road from Ste. Marie across the fire-swept slope to bring help as quickly as possible to his endangered comrades. But Prince August of Württemberg, who had personally watched the heroic battle of his troops directly in front of Ste. Marie, directed the colonel to march first along the meadow bottom north of the village, which afforded some hope of protection. Colonel Neumann led his battalions in the direction designated, making proper use of the protection offered by the terrain, then by a right turn, changed direction into a flat basin adjoining the slope, so that the regiment faced the northwest corner of St. Privat. From there battalion after battalion ascended the ridge to join the left of the 1st Brigade. But

the battalions were no sooner seen by the enemy than they fell victims to the fury of his mass fire and this regiment also freely poured out its blood and life on that large sacrificial ridge, consecrated to the fatherland. Colonel Neumann first caused the two Grenadier battalions of Wolfradt and Sichart to start forward. In the rebuffing shower of bullets Lieutenant Colonel Wolfradt received a wound which was subsequently to prove mortal but which could not then induce him to leave his battalion. Nearly all the mounted officers fell at the same time, their horses also shot with them, and in quick succession most of the captains were wounded. There also a Niederstetter gave his life for his country. In the glow of the hostile mass-fire the companies rapidly melted away, but paying scarcely any attention to the dying and wounded, the unscathed rushed farther and farther ahead. The objective pointed out was reached, the left flank of the 1st Brigade covered, and now, themselves fired on from two sides, the Grenadiers hug the slope, firing on the hostile sharpshooters behind the stone walls. To create a breathing space on their left, Colonel Neumann galloped back to bring up the Fusiliers, but was struck and seriously wounded just as Major Tietzen, perceiving the situation, brought the Fusiliers up to the left of the Grenadiers. Against them now turns the threefold fury of the fire, striking their front, flank, and rear, but they also reach the ridge to the left of their comrades and they also hang on tenaciously and open fire. All the losses sustained there were unable either to break the power of this 4th Regiment, or to lessen the frightful momentum of its last desperate charge.

Such hours of distress and such hours of the severest trial are also hours of consecration in which the leader, hardened by battle, feels himself imbued with rejuvenated force and in which the youth, standing for the first time face to face with death, quickly ripens into manhood. So stood the Guard, awaiting the decision, on the ground they had gained with their blood, firm within the realm of annihilation, like the oak in the hurricane; though its branches are splintered and shattered, though its green leaves are ripped off in the tempest, the groaning and trembling trunk holds

fast by its trusty roots, knowing that to yield will mean utter destruction!

There we see the generals unweariedly, and with unalterable decision, lead the Guard against the enemy again and again; we see the enemy being enveloped more and more, until the Guard begins to embrace him even from the north. The enemy is pressed closer and closer together in his last bulwark, and many an eye in his ranks is already directed toward the rear. General Pape still had four battalions at his disposal, which, although they had lost 400 men, were as good as fresh troops. Therefore, if it had been necessary, a last forcible attempt could still have been made by the Guard itself to incline the scales of fortune in its favor. But the enormous pressure of the movement of the Saxons from Montois was already making itself felt; already the Guard saw the leading battalions of the Saxons advancing on their left against the ridge, and the impulse for a renewed advance began to animate the thin lines of the Guard. As a matter of fact, the final decision in the heavy battle is to be credited to the interference of the Saxon Corps, not only to the pressure of its main masses, but also to the heroic deeds of the battalions which directly entered the battle. The glory due the Saxons must be accorded them without reservation; nevertheless an unbiased judgment will recognize that it was only in consequence of the self-sacrifice of the Guard that the decision came with such suddenness and such far reaching consequences as to assume the nature of a frightful catastrophe to the enemy. For only the fact that the enemy was already greatly shaken can explain why, in spite of his strong position, panic overtook the reserves in rear even during the final charge, so that everyone took to flight. It was in consequence of this that the last phase which decided the battle lasted less than an hour, and before it was accomplished it was almost dark. As a matter of fact, there had not been a single minute to spare.

But before we turn to the last act of this heart-rending drama—the assault on St. Privat—we must give an account of the achievements and sufferings of the 3d Guard Brigade.

As soon as General Manstein observed the attack of the 4th Guard Brigade taking place on his left, he issued orders, in obedience to directions given by Prince Frederick Charles, to General Wittich and Colonel Knappe to attack the ridge at Amanvillers. General Wittich was to execute this with the Hessian battalions on both sides of the railroad, Colonel Knappe to advance on the right of the latter with the Guard from the Bois de la Cusse.

The battery of Unruhe, attached to the brigade, was already engaged on the fire-swept ridge, extending tongue shaped from Amanvillers to Verneville, the ridge on which the artillery of the 9th Corps had about concluded its victorious battle; the battery of Unruhe had had its full share in that battle, and had suffered severely. Of his infantry Colonel Knappe first started the Rifle battalion and the two battalions of the Kaiser Alexander Regiment* in the first line, the Queen Elizabeth Regiment being kept in rear for the present, and with it the pioneer companies. On the left, the riflemen worked their way through the dense woods of the Bois de la Cusse; on the right, the battalions of the Alexander Regiment advanced south of these woods. The edge of the woods facing east was held at that time by the Hessian battalions under Colonel Stamm; immediately behind these latter, within the forest, stood the battalions of the 18th Division which had battled for hours and hours and had suffered great losses—these were the Schleswig-Holstein and Magdeburg Fusiliers. The objective of the attack, the ridge of Amanvillers, was held by the masses of the Ladmirault Corps and principally by the Lorencez Division. Dense skirmish lines filled every available fold in the ground; a sunken road leading along the slope was densely occupied with an especially destructive firing line. In front of that sunken road was a sort of broad glacis on which the attacker was completely at the mercy of the defender's mass fire. The skirmishers under Major Fabeck had the shortest road to the enemy and thus had the precedence in the

*The 1st Battalion of the Kaiser Alexander Regiment, under Major Seckt, had engaged in the battle directly from Habonville with the Berger Brigade.

battle. As soon as they emerged from the edge of the covering woods into the open field a deadening mass fire was poured forth from the hostile lines in which and through which the leading two companies of the first line advanced without hesitation against the ridge held by the enemy. The hostile bullets struck the companies in front and on both flanks, men fell by squads, but the line continued on and on to within 500 paces of the sunken road. Then the second line appeared and carried the first line some distance closer to the enemy.

Close to the sunken road the Rifles halted, a thin line, steadily getting thinner, hugging the slope under the hail of bullets. Many brave men had fallen. Major Fabeck was mortally wounded after having had two horses shot under him; with this experienced leader two young heroes, Count Dohna and Count Langenbeck were killed outright. While attending the wounded, Dr. von Lichtenstein shared the same fate, and very soon all the officers were either killed or wounded and the command fell to Cadet Haugwitz. The total loss was 17 officers and more than 450 men. But in the midst of all these horrible losses the Rifles never lost their calmness, nor did their guns waver in their deadly aim. Although the greatly superior enemy was covered up to the eyes their bullets found him and, as was subsequently seen, his dead lay in rows in the sunken road.

Immediately after this heroic charge Colonel Knappe had led the two battalions of the Kaiser Alexander Regiment into the fight farther to the right, during which advance his hand was shattered by a bullet and his adjutant, Lieutenant von Berg, and his orderly officer, Lieutenant von Hessenthal, were also wounded.

Major Schon intended to lead the Fusiliers to the left of the Rifles, but the road to that point was hot and the mass fire terribly destructive. Major Schon was killed and with him Captains Sack and John and Lieutenants Treskow and Petersdorf. At every forward step officers and men fall together, and finally, when the line of the Rifles is reached, the three companies have but one officer each, the 12th Company being led by Sergeant Schulte. Only after a loss of 11

officers and 450 men, was the post of honor gained and maintained.

Keeping to the right from the very start, Major von Schmeling had in the meantime brought his Grenadiers to the ridge southwest of Amanvillers, having the artillery of the 9th Corps on his right. On the ridge itself these troops found the remnants of the exhausted Hessian Guard Jägers under Captain Daudistel, and, since these troops had no ammunition left after the many hours of hot struggle, the Guard took their places; the Jägers, however, left but slowly the position they had held so long and so gloriously. The troops of the Alexander Regiment covered the flank of the artillery against the repeated attacks of the hostile infantry. The hostile columns charged repeatedly against this thin line with trumpet calls and with wild yells, but were each time driven back by the destructive rapid fire of the Grenadiers. The Grenadiers suffered heavily, however, many of their dead covered the ground and in the continuous fire fight the ammunition ran out for the second time. All cartridges had been taken from the dead and wounded, but still men had to be sent to neighboring troops to beg for ammunition to prevent the position gained from having to be abandoned. It would have been impossible to resist the repeated attacks of the enemy at Amanvillers had not, shortly after that position was taken, the loud beating of drums announced that another regiment had taken position on the left of the line. In order to fill the additional gap between the battalions of the Kaiser Alexander Regiment, Colonel Zeuner had sent the Queen Elizabeth Regiment from the forest. Only its 2d Battalion remained behind as a last reserve and with it the pioneers under Captains Krause and Spankeren. These latter also entered the battle later on; here, as everywhere, recourse was had to the last man, and Captain von Spankeren proved by an honorable wound that the pioneers fulfill the requirements of the firing line equally well as those of entrenching.

On the right of the Fusiliers, the two Grenadier companies of the 1st Battalion¹ on the left, the battalions of the

¹The 1st and 4th Companies had been detached.

Queen Elizabeth Regiment under Colonel Zaluskowsky hastened forward into the battle.

Lieutenant Colonel Grolmann led his Fusiliers at the charge, with drums beating, through the hail of projectiles up the ridge of Amanvillers until he arrived on the left of the Grenadiers and immediately in front of the hostile masses.

Since there was no chance for a further advance Lieutenant Colonel Grolmann then opened fire. There also the ranks were thinned with frightful rapidity. Lieutenant Colonel Grolmann was himself wounded, but remained at the front, and by careful control of the fire here proved the annihilating power of the needle gun. The following day the French dead were found lying in rows behind the cover and in the furrows of the field. Hotter still and bloodier was the road farther to the left taken by the two Grenadier companies; for the unbroken fury of the hostile fire struck not only their front but also their left flank. There Colonel Zaluskowsky and Major Knobelsdorf set an incomparable example and death itself lost its sting. Major Knobelsdorf was mortally wounded; soon Lieutenant von Düring was the only officer still on his feet and in the final rush even he fell, pierced by three bullets, and only a weak remnant gained the firing line under the leadership of First Sergeant Sowade.

Thus, toward seven o'clock, the brigade formed but a thin line, its right wing towards Champenois, its left on the sunken road filled by the enemy. Farther to the left the Hessians under General Wittich had pushed ahead as far as the small waiting house on the railroad. From there General Wittich had unsuccessfully attempted a desperate rush against the sunken road to relieve the sorely pressed Guard. In vain also had the Hessian Colonel Stamm, perceiving the precarious situation of the Rifles, charged from the forest only to find his death. Likewise in vain did the last force of Schleswig-Holsteiners give up their blood and life; a further advance was and remained impossible for the time being.

Hostile columns repeatedly charged this thin line, but were in each instance driven back decisively; and here again the Guard held on without giving way a single pace; it may let go its life, but never its post or its trust.

At about half after seven o'clock the battle at St. Privat was renewed with redoubled energy. From the ridge south of the village a horrible shell fire overflowed the uncovered flank of the Ladmiraute Corps; that corps, already badly shaken, made desperate attempts to withdraw from the vortex which was already engulfing the 6th Corps on the other side. The Guard at Amanvillers feels the resistance decreasing in its front. By order of Colonel Zeuner, Lieutenant Colonel Bernhardt leads the last battalion of the brigade, the 2d of the Queen Elizabeth Regiment, to hazard a final assault. The final fury of the hostile mass fire overwhelmed this battalion, but it reached the firing line with its power unbroken and proudly carried that line forward. Darkness is already falling; Amanvillers, shot into flames by this time, only indistinctly illuminates the variegated scene. In order to infuse renewed courage into the men, Colonel Zaluski has the trumpeters sound the charge, the drummers beat the drums, and with loud hurrahs the entire thinned out line rises up. Lieutenant Zimietzky throws himself with the Fusiliers of the Queen Elizabeth Regiment into the midst of the enemy. Even the Guard Rifles, all shot to pieces, gather together in order not to lose their share of the glory. They were led by Cadet von Haugwitz, the only remaining officer, since Lieutenant von Reclam, who had hastened up again after having his wound dressed, had joined the Kaiser Alexander Regiment. The 2d Battalion of the Queen Elizabeth Regiment rushed forward with renewed vigor and Lieutenant von Harenberg was the first on the ridge immediately west of Amanvillers. There a bitter hand to hand conflict ensued and a large number of the Lorencez Division were taken prisoners by the Grenadiers. Thus, the older regiment had not remained behind the younger,¹ for no sooner had they perceived the 2d Battalion of the Kaiser Alexander Regiment feeling its way to the front, than the Grenadiers under Captain von Rössing charged forward, although they had not a single cartridge left either in their rifles or pouches; the bayonet was their sole reliance in the *melée*.

¹The Kaiser Alexander Regiment was organized in 1814, the Queen Elizabeth Regiment not until 1860.—Trsl.

After a battle lasting nine hours and after having lost more than 4,000 men, General Ladmiraault's power was broken; to gain a breathing space for the fleeing masses, he caused several counter charges to be made by troops still able to fight, which were energetically repulsed by the left wing of the Knappe Brigade. But here also after the final supreme effort the last forces were exhausted.

In the meantime General Manstein had sent orders to break off the combat, since a fight in the dark promised no good results. Outposts were established and contact with the enemy again gained. The latter had the audacity to call on the outposts to surrender, but Lieutenant Schuckmann made a suitable reply with a volley and thereupon a rapid fire was once more opened. Amanvillers itself had in the meantime been evacuated by the enemy and was occupied at daybreak on the 19th of August.

The numerous graves of heroes on the ridge of Amanvillers indicate the limit of the terrain gained by the Guard by force of arms on this day.

Let us now return again to St. Privat. It was towards seven o'clock when the left wing of the Guard perceived the advance of the Saxon battalions on St. Privat. About six o'clock Prince George had reached Montois with the enveloping column; about half after six the Crown Prince of Saxony rode ahead toward Roncourt because it appeared that the attack on that place had been commenced. General Craushaar and his brigade were already advancing from the west against that place and Lieutenant Colonel Oppeln and Major Seegeberg had joined that brigade with the seven Guard companies above mentioned. But although Marshal Canrobert at the start had placed strong forces at Roncourt, later he drew in these troops of the right wing to St. Privat, in order to concentrate himself more and more against the repeated charges of the Guard and in order not to be caught by the envelopment of the Saxons whose movements he had observed. Only a rear guard remained at Roncourt. Engaged in a sharp fire fight with this rear guard, General Craushaar pressed gradually forward against that village in conjunction with the Guard companies mentioned.

Steps were already under way for the immediate attack on that village, when Lieutenant Essbeck, sent by General Pape to gain information of the situation as regards the Saxons, again appeared galloping over the battlefield. He recounted to General Craushaar in urgent words how desirable a quick interference at St. Privat would be; hastening on, Lieutenant von Essbeck encountered Colonel Schweidnitz leading the two battalions from Montois and stated the same to him. Although both commanders had definite orders to advance on Roncourt, the most noble devotion drew them to where the danger was more pressing and where it was worth while to bring the help longed for to their imperilled comrades. Thus, in the very hour of the decision, the interference of the Saxons at St. Privat, although arranged for by the higher leaders, assumed the character of an act of free will emanating from the troops themselves and thus proved the finest expression of comradeship-in-arms, heartily tendered and as heartily rendered to the Prussian army and its consecration on the field of battle.

Both these men paid with their lives for that decision, but the names of both are engraved forever in letters of gold in the book of heroes of the New Germany.

On the left, Lieutenant Colonel Schweidnitz, at the head of the two battalions of the 107th, had hardly reached the heights near St. Privat when the fatal bullet reached him.

On the right, the King William and King John regiments with their symbolic sounding names, pressed forward shoulder to shoulder, immediately beside the Guard, towards the enemy and fame. There also, in the hot fire fight, heavy losses were sustained and close to this self-imposed objective of fame, General Craushaar sank to his death. The 4th Guard Regiment received the onrushing Saxons with cheers, rose from the ground, and joined in the charge on the village.

Thus was the final assault made here prepared. Six Saxon battalions executed in conjunction with the Guard the charge proper directly on the village of St. Privat. Other Saxon troops had taken Roncourt in the meantime, together with the Guard Grenadiers above mentioned. A Saxon brigade was engaged in a hot fire fight east of Roncourt and

at the forest of Jaumont and the remaining troops were just being brought up by the Crown Prince of Saxony toward the foremost firing line to form the necessary reserve for the assault.

After having taken Roncourt Lieutenant Colonel Oppeln with a part of the King John Regiment and Major Seegeberg with his Grenadiers pressed forward in a southeasterly direction; they encountered strong masses of the enemy in rear of St. Privat and became engaged in a hot fight. There also the bodies of the brave men indicated the limits of the advance, and there the knightly commander of the 1st Guard Regiment, Colonel von Röder, was overtaken by fate. The deadly bullet struck him while he, moving everywhere, was attempting to bring order into that battle group and, vainly attempting to assist him, the Saxon Captain Weber was seriously wounded while performing this service of comradeship. These companies constituted, however, a far off but essential protection to the left flank of the main line advancing on St. Privat.

In the meantime the uninterrupted fire of the Guard batteries had effected its good work within St. Privat as was plainly to be seen. At this time, after a quarter before eight, almost the entire Saxon artillery joined in the bombardment, enveloping St. Privat in a wide arc of fire from west and north. Jerusalem was already in flames, in St. Privat flames broke out and prominent buildings crumbled under the rain of shells. Prince August of Württemberg gave the order for the final rush; Generals Pape and Budritzky gave the signal for the start to the nearest troops. But before these orders reached them, the entire line of its own will arose and, with a premonition of the final victory, threw itself against the long denied objective. Every man tries to get ahead of the man next him but the same zeal brings all up simultaneously and the laurels won by Guards and Saxons in conjunction can be regarded only as a jewel worn in common.

Along the entire line the buglers sound the forward, the drummers beat the charge with redoubled vim, the colors are in front, their bearers changing five and six times, the officers are near them, where there are officers still to be

found standing, all the unwounded and the wounded as well, forgetting their pains in the intoxicating onset, rush from all sides with joyous hurrahs and throw themselves on the desperate enemy within, who in vain pours out against them his last rapid fire.

Opposite the right wing the fire of the Guard batteries had shaken the hostile infantry the most, therefore, the advance was there the quickest. What there is left of the Queen Augusta and Kaiser Franz Regiments, the wounded Captains Count Keller, Trotha and von Cöln in the lead with a mere handful of other unwounded officers, assault the burning Jerusalem, the garrison of which is quickly overcome, that is, that part of it which waited for the assault. Other parts of the line assault St. Privat directly and, with them, the Grenadiers and Fusiliers of the 2d Guard Regiment break into the village and into the midst of the enemy. In the village a hand to hand struggle ensues and in the final rush Lieutenant Besser of the Kaiser Franz is wounded. But while the German shells are still bursting in St. Privat, Major von Görne charges with his troops clear through the village to its farther edge.

Farther to the left the resistance of the enemy is more stubborn and the last battle correspondingly more bitter. A terrible fire is poured on the rest of the Grenadiers of the 3d Regiment led by the wounded Lieutenants Quast and Becher, as well as by First Sergeant Koschikowitz—the latter falling mortally wounded close to the walls of the village—but the embittered Grenadiers break into the houses and throw themselves on the enemy. On their left Captain Röder leads his battle group of the 1st Regiment to the assault; he falls mortally wounded, pierced by three bullets. Close to the village walls Lieutenant Bonin is wounded, but First Sergeants Münchert and Wachholz, to set an example, hasten to the front and with Drummer Beyer beating the charge with desperate vigor, all charge the crowded enemy with butt and bayonet. On their left, Count Pückler throws himself into the *melée*. Still farther, on that side, the Grenadiers of the 4th Guard Regiment assault the projecting corner of the village with irresistible fury; but there the enemy is still in con-

siderable strength and holds his ground. Under his rapid fire every step forward has to be paid for with blood. When almost at the goal Captains Briesen and Krosigk are mortally wounded. Of the other dying heroes we will mention only one name, so dear to the fatherland, for here a York von Wartenberg for the fatherland went to his death. But to avenge their comrades' death the Grenadiers charge, led by Lieutenant Hannemann. Through the gaps in the wall, over the high walls of the buildings, the enemy is assaulted with a bitterness easily understood and in the first *melée* no quarter is asked or given. In a small quadrangle, stormed by Major Sichart's Grenadiers, lay fifty-seven slain Frenchmen.

From the north, the Fusiliers of the 4th Guard Regiment, led by Captain Scholten and Lieutenant Schmeling, charged against the village entrance and with them the Saxons, coming from all sides. Here, also, a bitter hand to hand struggle ensues and, close to the goal, with the colors in their hands, the Saxon Captains Pape and Witteren find their death. In the rush each one the braver tries to get ahead of his comrades, the entrance is blocked by the onrushing assaulters and, in order also to gain the village in good time, others, like Lieutenant Schmeling, break through the enclosure farther to the left. Another group, composed of men of the 4th Guard Regiment, of the Saxon Regiments King John and King William, is led, by Captain Rouvroy, carrying the colors aloft, to the assault. As these colors disappear in the *melée* in the village, Lieutenant von Arnim of the 1st Guard Regiment calls out to the wounded Lieutenant von Büнау lying alongside: "Comrade, your colors are in the village, let us give a cheer for your King;" and for a moment the hurrahs for King John, of the Prussian and Saxon Grenadiers, rise above the steady roar of the battle.

Man against man, the real zest of fighting awakes in the Germans, and joyously the German innate hatred comes into play against the enemy. It is a smashing blow, as though given with Thor's hammer, and with astonishment we see how the original fierce impetuosity of ancient Germanic manhood, which so often made even Rome tremble and whose achievements Tacitus, the Roman, relates to us with such

undisguised wonderment, breaks through the bonds of custom of a more temperate era. Disdaining the use of arms, the power of manhood is here seen to assert its rights; in the 4th Guard Regiment the Grenadiers throw heavy rocks picked off the field into the crowded mass of the enemy, and more powerful Grenadiers of the 1st Regiment butt the heads of weaker enemies together until they surrender.

Such a furious onset the enemy could not withstand. In vain did Marshal Canrobert show himself again and again where danger was greatest, past and beyond him the stream of fugitives took its course; beaten and dispersed, in complete confusion the corps rolled back toward the valley of the Mosel, leaving three thousand dead and wounded and about two thousand unwounded prisoners in the hands of the conqueror. Though repeatedly entreated by Marshal Canrobert and General Ladmirault to send support, Marshal Bazaine had thus far not complied with these entreaties, probably because he thought that in such strong positions the 6th and the 4th Corps were themselves sufficient to hold out even against a great superiority. Now, however, still in time, the Guard Grenadiers appeared most timely on the edge of the woods south of the chaussee with strong artillery prepared to give proper protection to the fleeing right wing.¹

In St. Privat itself the fight for possession of individual houses lasted for a long time, the garrison fighting desperately; but darkness hid the final acts of the Germans as well as the flight of the French. Hardly had the infantry reached St. Privat when, by orders of Prince Hohenlohe, all Guard batteries hastened forward to the ridge south of the village and threw their shells with deadly accuracy into the dense masses of General Ladmirault's troops north of Amanvillers. At the same time the fire of the French batteries,

¹General Canrobert's endeavors had resulted only in forming troops in the rear into a rear guard at the forest of Jaumont, which kept away from the stream of fugitives; that rear guard was engaged by Saxon battalions of the extreme left wing and driven back to the quarries at Jaumont. Only complete darkness caused the Saxons to give up the further pursuit. According to the heated imagination of certain French reporters these quarries became a common grave for masses of Germans.

placed in two tiers one above the other, was replied to and this artillery duel again started the horrible battle in all its fury. Earlier than this and after a glorious race to take part, batteries of the 10th Corps, which had reached St. Ail, appeared on the scene. Soon there were 146 guns massed together, almost wheel to wheel. The projectiles of the guns caused great havoc among the masses under General Ladmirault. In order to overcome the fire from those guns General Ladmirault with his last forces attempted three times to charge against that artillery line, but just as often his columns had to fall back torn and cut to pieces by the German shells. Simultaneously with this event the assaults of the Guard and Hessians against that hostile line occurred, as has been previously related, and the last stand of this French corps was also broken and General Ladmirault saw his own troops also fleeing back in confusion, paying no heed to commands.

On the day after the battle the entire country between St. Privat and Amanvillers showed nothing but furrows ploughed by the shells and horribly maimed dead bodies, which gave the first indication of the horrible destructiveness of the German artillery.

However, the German batteries also had a hard time holding their position as the French batteries hurled at them from the other side a rapid shell fire, using up all their ammunition down to the last shot. It had now become dark and the flames of the burning Jerusalem and St. Privat lighted up only the nearer terrain. The fire of the hostile batteries was mainly concentrated on the Guard batteries of Roon and Ising which were in position within this zone of light. Captain Ising had his arm shattered by a shell; a caisson blew up alongside of Captain Roon, maiming men and horses, but Captain Roon himself escaped unharmed.¹

With the same calmness and endurance with which they had opened the fight on this day, the Guard batteries closed their activity on this hot and for them so glorious day. The Bychelberg Battalion remained on the battlefield during the night, close by the outposts, its guns directed toward the

¹Captain von Roon received a mortal wound at Sedan.

enemy, being guarded by the Westphalian battalions of the Schwarzkoppen Division, which had been sent over from St. Ail by General Voigts-Rhetz, commanding the 10th Corps.

General von Pape had entered St. Privat with the first detachments of the assaulting infantry and at once took measures to secure that place. He had brought up a reserve during the assault; the Guard Fusiliers under Major Feldmann stood south of St. Privat shortly after the first detachments had entered the village, and there, unfortunately, a deadly bullet reached Major Schmeling just as he was dismounting to offer his horse to General von Pape, who had just then had his second horse shot under him.

While the fight in the village was slowly dying out, the Diringshofen Brigade of the 10th Corps arrived in all haste at the decisive point, coming from St. Ail. The Westphalians and Brunswickers still had a chance, some to participate in cleaning out the various houses, others to charge beyond the village into the darkness. The Brunswickers fired for some time still on the great hostile batteries on the edge of the forest.

It was past ten o'clock before the heat of the battle finally subsided, but then very soon love and compassion, the ancient inherent qualities of the Germans, made themselves felt. Forgetting personal danger, Guardsmen, Saxons and Westphalians hastened into the church, which threatened to collapse at any moment, and into the burning houses to save from death by fire the seriously wounded French soldiers left therein.

Drums and trumpet signals now called the men, deadly tired, to the assembly. For eighteen hours they had been active during the unbearable heat of this hot summer day. The battle itself had lasted for nine hours, during which time each one of the Guard battalions had entered the foremost fighting line, and the very last particle of energy had been thrown in by them with incomparable willingness to sacrifice themselves. Round the few remaining officers the debris of the battalions assembled, and the men camped and slept, wherever they assembled, on the blood-soaked battlefield of St. Privat, weirdly lighted up—the flames of

burning houses battling with the moonlight for precedence. The generals remained in the midst of their troops.

The Saxons camped in the terrain round Roncourt for which they had battled so hotly. The Crown Prince of Saxony had established his headquarters in that village and the giant Grenadiers of the 1st Guard Regiment there formed the guard of honor over the body of Colonel von Röder, who had been killed.

As yet no one cared to inquire into the fate of those who were absent, but when, later on, the numbers of the missing increased and increased, it was found that the roll of honor amounted to 1 general, 290 officers and 7,500 men out of a total loss by the Germans of more than 19,000 men.¹

The correctness of that number has often been questioned, but was it not absolutely necessary that this had to be so in order to save our fatherland?

It is the very distinguishing mark of an exalted era that the generation which bore its burden, seeing far beyond the narrow confines of its own mere existence, endeavored and sacrificed itself for the welfare of future generations, and thus German unity was bound to grow like the oak at the heroes' grave. Should the question however again arise, as in the case of this heaviest victory of this heavy war, of having to take such an unapproachable position when opposed by the mass fire of the modern small arms, thousands and thousands will have to be sacrificed regardless of everything; and the troops, to whose lot this glorious task falls, will have to hug death, as did Arnold Winkelried long ago, in order to break the road to victory through the hostile wall of arms. No matter how great the losses were, the issue and effect were far greater. A hostile corps had been completely annihilated and driven into flight together with a second corps. The entire position had been made untenable for the enemy, so that his main army saw itself driven down into the valley by Metz, its power shattered, its confidence gone. And now only German headquarters could have thought of

¹According to the statements of their reliable authorities, the loss of the French Army was 12,000 men, to which the 4th Corps (Ladmirault) and the 6th Corps (Canrobert) contributed a combined total of 9,000.

having Prince Frederick Charles enclose with a solid iron ring the very small space, which was still left to the hostile army, thus depriving that army of any further chance of being a field army. Moreover the royal war lord still had three German army corps at his disposal which he could form into an additional army, under command of the Crown Prince of Saxony, and with which, in conjunction with the army under the Crown Prince of Prussia, he was able very soon to have a Sedan follow St. Privat.

To have poured out its heart's blood, and that not in vain, for the fatherland, to have struggled and fought for the highest achievement and with undying glory, was and will always remain the well deserved glory of the Prussian Guard, compensating for all its suffering and hardships.

Just as entire Prussia bled through its Guard, so entire Prussia is proud of the laurels gained by its Guard.

This comforting conviction had necessarily to take the bitterness off the tears shed at home, this proud consciousness had necessarily to cool in the field the many thousand burning wounds and had to give rejuvenated power to the exhausted Guard for further endeavor and contest.

On that evening, quite naturally, when darkness covered the flight of the enemy, the over-tired men could have no idea of the extent of the success attained. But when the Germans, facing east, saw the enemy gone from everywhere on the 19th of August, they perceived and were glad because of the enormous importance of yesterday's victory, and the early morning red of the dawn there was typical of the dawn of the immense future of the saved fatherland.

The Operations of the IId Army

by

FREIHERR VON DER GOLTZ

Captain, Great General Staff

The 17th of August¹

* * *

PRINCE Frederick Charles' intentions therefore were to attack the enemy not later than the 18th of August; to start on that day as early as possible so that the sun would not set before the final decision had been completely fought out. However, before IId Army Headquarters could make its dispositions toward this end the approval of His Majesty the King had to be secured. This was done, and after Royal Headquarters had expressed its approval of the intended measures, the Prince issued the following army orders:

On the Battlefield of Vionville, 17. August, 1870, 1 p.m.

The enemy appears to draw back in part northwestward and in part toward Metz.

The IId Army and the 8th and 7th Army Corps will look tomorrow in a northerly direction for the retreating enemy and beat him.

Today the corps will camp, by corps, on the battlefield of Vionville, the 9th Army Corps on the right wing. The outposts of the latter corps will seek connection in the forest in front with the outposts of the 8th Corps, which bivouacks by Gorze, and will extend on the left as far as the Metz—Verdun road in front of Flavigny.

The 3d Army Corps camps at Vionville and Flavigny; its outposts, connecting with those of the 9th Corps, will extend on the left as far as the western edge of the forest north of Vionville.

The 12th (Royal Saxon) Army Corps will yet today go into bivouac at Mars la Tour and will send its outposts as far as the Yron brook; it will also send out a detachment of cavalry to observe the road to Verdun through Hannonville.

The corps furnishing outposts will have officers reconnoiter the terrain in their front to ascertain suitable roads for further advance, in so far as the enemy permits.

¹Published in November, 1873. From Chapter V, p. 116.

The 10th Army Corps remains in its camp at Tronville.

The Guard Corps will go into camp at Puxieux.

The 2d Army Corps will start from Pont à Mousson at 4 a.m. tomorrow and march through Arnaville, Bayonville and Onville to Buxières, where it will close in mass north of that village and cook.

Army headquarters is today in Buxières.

(Sgd.) FREDERICK CHARLES.

The following was added to these orders for the 4th Army Corps:

To the right of 4th Army Corps only the Guard Uhlan Brigade has been left back with directions to reconnoiter toward the Meuse in direction of St. Mihiel.

4th Army Corps line Boucq—Sanzey—Jaillon.

The instructions of His Majesty, though already issued verbally, were in addition written down briefly by General von Moltke. They read as follows:

The II^d Army will tomorrow the 18th start at 5 a.m. and advance by echelons between the Yron and Gorze brooks (in general between Ville sur Yron and Rézonville).

The 8th Corps will join that movement on the right wing of the II^d Army. In the start the 7th Army Corps will have the task of protecting the movements of the II^d Army against possible hostile operations from the direction of Metz.

Further directions of His Majesty the King will depend on the measures of the enemy.

Reports for His Majesty to be sent for the present to the heights south of Flavigny.

(Sgd.) V. MOLTKE.

17. August, 1.45 p.m.

(Dictated on the battlefield of Vionville).

Thus the general limits of the task of the II^d Army had been set for the 18th of August. Special instructions could be issued on the morning of that day in conformity with the situation then existing – which possibly might be changed.

Therefore the Prince requested the attendance of the commanding generals of the Guard, 10th and 12th Army Corps at the bivouac of the Saxons at Mars la Tour at five o'clock in the morning to receive verbal orders; the commanding generals of the 3d and 9th Army Corps, for the same object, at 5.30 o'clock at the bivouac of the 3d Corps, west of Vionville.

As there was no expectation of any engagement being had today and as His Majesty the King had returned to his headquarters in Pont à Mousson, Prince Frederick Charles left the battlefield and dismounted about four o'clock in the afternoon in the small village of Buxières.

As a matter of fact, the directions of Army Headquarters had not been carried out completely. Since the Guard Corps reported at about one o'clock in the afternoon that it was resting at Puxieux, while at the same time the 12th (Royal Saxon) Corps was already on the march to Mars la Tour, Army Headquarters considered it best to assign the Guard Corps a bivouac place at Puxieux, consequently in rear of the Saxons. This had been provided for in the above army orders.

However, in obedience to orders from Army Headquarters received by it on the night of the 16/17th, directing it to Mars la Tour, to the left of the Saxons, the Guard Corps had gone into bivouacks at Hannonville au Passage, reporting that fact to Army Headquarters. This report crossed, on the way, the army orders, being sent at the very moment to the Guard Corps.

That corps remained in the bivouac it had taken, even after it had received the orders, so as not to again interrupt the rest of the troops after their long fatiguing march.

The 18th of August

On the morning of the 18th of August the various parts of the IId Army were at the following places:

1. 9th Army Corps on the plateau west of the Bois de Vionville;

2. 3d Army Corps with the 6th Cavalry Division at Vionville—Flavigny; a part of the corps at Buxières—Chambley.¹

3. 10th Army Corps at Tronville, behind it the 5th Cavalry Division.

¹To that place the 5th Infantry Division had moved on August 17th, since water was lacking in its bivouac on the plateau.

4. The 12th Army Corps south of Mars la Tour and at Puxieux.¹

5. Guard Corps south of Hannonville au Passage.

6. 2d Army Corps on the march from Pont à Mousson (where it had arrived on the 17th) to Buxières.

7. 4th Army Corps at Boucq (not far from Toul).

Shortly before 5 a.m. the commander of the IId Army, Prince Frederick Charles, arrived at the bivouac of the 12th (Royal Saxon) Army Corps at Mars la Tour.

The verbal instructions issued here, and half an hour later at Vionville, to the corps commanders could of course be based only on the information of the situation as regards the enemy, which had been gained up to that moment.

Reports received by the Prince stated that the enemy had been on the march toward the evening of the 17th on both roads in front of the IId Army leading west and north-west respectively. In consequence the estimate of the situation formed on the afternoon of August 17th remained unchanged.

The army commander even considered it probable that the French bivouac observed the day before east of Grave-lotte had disappeared.

He believed, as stated, that he was not justified in assuming that the army under Bazaine would take a position for a battle against the superior German armies with its rear against Metz and the steep sides of the valley of the Mosel. He rather considered it probable that the IId Army would have, on August 18th, to attack the enemy north in front or on the left flank. But this of course was only a temporary supposition.

A short advance in the morning hours must bring certainty. During this advance the main thing to be kept in mind was that the enemy was unquestionably close at hand

¹The 12th Cavalry Division had passed the night at Parfondrupt with outposts on the Metz—Conflans—Etain road. On the 17th three persons (among them a Marquis de Marguerie, apparently a high ranking supply officer) had been stopped as suspicious characters at St. Jean les Buzy on that road and had been sent in the evening in charge of an orderly officer of the division first to 12th Corps headquarters and later to army headquarters. The latter sent them on to Royal Headquarters. Patrols of the 12th Army Corps had gone as far as Jarny on the 17th without encountering the enemy.

and a battle consequently imminent. This necessitated making the march not in long march columns, but in large masses ready for battle. According to the terrain features which could be seen from the map, this procedure seemed to offer no difficulties. Army orders of August 17th had in addition charged the corps in the first line with reconnaissance of the foreground. For these reasons Prince Frederick Charles deemed it correct to have the Saxon Corps start first, to be followed by the Guard Corps, though the designated march direction of the two corps would cross in the vicinity of Mars la Tour.

The verbal orders of Prince Frederick Charles read about as follows:

The IId Army will continue the march this forenoon. The mission remains as heretofore, to drive the enemy off his line of retreat on Verdun—Chalons, and to defeat him wherever found.

The 12th Army Corps will start at once¹ as leading echelon of the left wing, in its right rear the Guard Corps, in the right rear of the latter the 9th Army Corps (about 6 a.m.).

The 12th Corps takes direction on Jarny, the Guard Corps on Doncourt. After the 9th Corps has passed between Vionville and Rézonville it will continue the advance, passing St. Marcel close to its left.

In the second line, opposite the intervals, the 3d Corps will advance on the right, the 10th on the left. In this advance the 6th Cavalry Division will be under the orders of the 3d Corps, the 5th under those of the 10th Corps.

The corps artillery of the 3d Army Corps will remain at the disposition of army headquarters as artillery reserve.

On the right of the IId Army the two corps of the 1st Army are advancing, the 8th in the right rear of the 9th Corps, the 7th farther towards Metz.²

The trains remain where they have passed the night, those of the 9th Army Corps between Vionville and Rézonville, where water can be had.

The advance will not be made in long march columns, but by divisions massed within themselves, the corps artillery between

¹These orders were issued at 5 a.m.

²The cavalry with the corps in the first line was all sufficient for reconnaissance purposes during the short march to the front; there could hardly be extensive tracts of flat terrain between the IId Army and the enemy. The 5th and 6th Cavalry Divisions were therefore kept in rear. In front was the Saxon Cavalry Division, the Cuirassier Brigade of the Guard Corps, the Hessian Cavalry Brigade, as well as the divisional cavalry regiments of the 5th Infantry Division.

the two divisions. For the present the question is merely one of an advance to the front of less than four miles, to occupy the northern road to Verdun. A rest will be made during the noon hour.

Finally Prince Frederick Charles explained, in a few words to the corps commanders, his estimate of the situation as regards the enemy, so as fully to assure in this manner unity of action in the subsequent movements of the army. The same intention had formed the basis of the orders issued, which formed the entire IId Army into one unit, the different parts of which were in direct communication. It was intended to have the army advance as a mass of brigades of enormous dimensions and to be able and ready to turn either to the right or to the left, according to where the enemy was found, thus bringing either the right or the left wing corps first into action.

The Prince himself intended to remain with the point of the 3d Army Corps during the advance.

The execution of the dispositions of the Prince was begun by the corps designated to start first. The leading element of the 12th Army Corps, the 108th Rifle Regiment, which defiled through the village of Mars la Tour in march columns, reached in that formation the main highroad Metz—Harville—Verdun, with its first section at 5.40 a.m.

From the place west of Vionville, where orders were issued to the commanding generals of the 3d and 9th Army Corps, St. Marcel, Doncourt, Bruville, Jarny and the environs of those villages could be seen. With the aid of glasses it was ascertained that the entire terrain there was free of the enemy.

As soon as the 12th Army Corps began its march on Jarny, indicating the general advance of the IId Army, Prince Frederick Charles sent a report thereof to the King on the heights of Flavigny, adding thereto:

Nothing of the enemy is seen marching on the road from St. Marcel to Doncourt. Camp at St. Marcel empty. During the night there was marching on that road.

Thus the enemy who had stood towards the north in front of the IId Army had disappeared. The further ques-

tion now was, what had become of that part of the French fighting forces observed yesterday towards the east in front of the right wing of the IId Army.

The first information received from there, through a picket standing opposite Gravelotte, indicated that the French had marched off. The officer there had reported:

I was up to within 400 paces of the hostile camp. Security measures not taken by the enemy, strength about 6-8 infantry divisions.¹

As far as can be ascertained, the artillery has marched off almost entirely; there are 1-2 cavalry regiments with white tunics. Everything creates the impression of a hasty marching off to Metz; at this time 6-8000 infantry east of Gravelotte.

18 Aug. 4.50 a.m.

Shortly thereafter a report arrived from the outposts of the 18th Division:

1. Gravelotte not occupied this morning.²
2. In camp general assembly sounded according to Dragoon picket, which also reports movements of the enemy toward the northwest.
3. The two companies in Rézonville report hostile infantry patrols in the forest north of Rézonville.—18 August, 5.15 a.m.

Of great interest in the 1st message was the sentence: "Everything creates the impression of a hasty marching off to Metz."

According to the belief then held by the commanding general of the IId Army this was not only possible, but even very probable. Since there had so far been only a part of the enemy immediately west of Metz, it appeared logical that that part, considering the German numerical superiority ready for the advance, would retreat back under the cannons of Metz.

¹French half-battalions were meant here evidently, as otherwise the statement of strength, given below, of 6-8000 infantry could not be explained. Furthermore, the sight of 6-8 infantry divisions would probably have induced the observing officer to report that he had seen the entire French army. In any case, he viewed too small a space to be able to gain the impression that he had three army corps in his front. That only weaker masses of troops were meant also agrees with the statement concerning the artillery and cavalry.

²Patrols had already visited the village on the 17th. Still, up to the early morning of the 18th, numerous Frenchmen, getting water, showed themselves there from time to time.

The statement in the second report became of importance, i.e., that the enemy was alarming his camp, and that movements were taking place toward the northwest. In order to gain rapid information of the conditions on that wing, which could not be seen from the location of army headquarters, Prince Frederick Charles sent an engineer officer of his staff to the vicinity of Gravelotte for observation.

This officer first sent a report from the outposts in position on the north edge of the Bois des Ognons, which also spoke of a retreat of the enemy in a northerly and northeasterly direction and which was stated as being reliable. But very soon his own observations gave a different result. The first message quoted above (dated 6.40 a.m.) had been received by army headquarters at 7.30 a.m. Forty-five minutes later the second report arrived stating that the camp was still there and that no troops had marched away from it. These were personal observations, not statements of outposts. It said further that movements had however been perceived in the camp since 3 a.m.

The next report of that officer (dated 8.45 a.m.) confirmed the last report. It read:

Lively movements in camp, apparently concentration of infantry more to the rear; edge of ridge still occupied by artillery.

The movements during the night caused by additions arriving; new camp fires lighted. At this time casual firing by the outposts.

The enemy still held his place on the heights east of Gravelotte and showed no intention of leaving it. Here reconnaissance had brought definite information.

That information was still awaited from the left wing of the army. So far no message of importance had been received from there.¹

The first report from that wing had been sent by the cavalry of the Guard Corps and arrived at 8.30 a.m. at army headquarters:

¹ On account of the importance of the road to Verdun, the 12th Army Corps received directions at 7.45 a.m. to order its cavalry detached on its left wing to send all messages and reports also direct to army headquarters.

Inhabitants of Bruville state that the French left Doncourt yesterday at 9.00 a.m. Direction of marching not known to them. Some state toward Verdun, others toward Briey, others toward Metz.

Nothing certain could be gained from this report, it only proved that during the past night no hostile column had marched on the road to Jarny.

At this time—8.30 a.m.—Royal Headquarters had reached the conclusion that the hostile main force stood in front of Metz and that its position extended as far as Amanvillers.¹ An officer of the General Staff brought this information.

It was considered desirable at Royal Headquarters that the IId Army keep to its present march direction. "If the northern road to Verdun were found clear of the enemy, the 12th and the Guard Corps should not be sent too far to the left." Should the correctness of the views entertained be confirmed, the Ist Army was designated to attack in front, the 9th Corps to envelop the hostile right wing, the Guard Corps to serve as reserve. The remaining corps were to halt for the present.

The dispositions of Prince Frederick Charles had already arranged for this halt, which was also necessary to conserve the strength of the troops. Nothing therefore remained except to issue special orders to the 9th Corps, which was charged with a special battle task. Consequently that corps

¹ As is known, the French Army on August 18th occupied the following positions:

1. The 6th Corps: Roncourt—St. Privat to the small depression east of St. Ail.

2. The 4th Corps: Amanvillers—Montigny la Grange, Champenois occupied in front.

3. The 3d Corps: La Folie—Leipzig—Moscou towards Le Point du Jour, outposts in the Bois des Genivaux.

4. The 2d Corps: Le Point du Jour, Roziereulles, Ste. Ruffine occupied on the left flank.

5. The Cavalry Division Forton at the mill of Longeau.

6. The Cavalry Division du Barail (two regiments of which had escorted the Emperor and were now detached) in the positions of the 6th Corps.

7. The Guard in reserve on the heights of the Mont St. Quentin and Plappeville.

The right wing of this position could not be seen from the heights of Flavigny.

received the following orders, dated Vionville, 18. August, 1870; 8.35 a.m.:

As soon as the main body of the infantry has reached Caulre Ferme northeast of St. Marcel, the corps will halt, will send out cavalry points toward Leipzig and St. Privat la Montagne and for connection with the Guard Corps, which will halt at Doncourt. Reports of the cavalry sent west will be made direct to General von Moltke as well as to me.

(Sgd.) FREDERICK CHARLES.¹

The Guard Corps received orders to halt at Doncourt, the 12th Corps at Jarny. Other orders could not be given these two corps at the time, as the strength of the enemy standing on the right flank was not yet sufficiently known to let it be judged whether other parts of the IId Army beside the 9th Army Corps could be utilized against him.

The 10th Army Corps was ordered to halt at Bruville as soon as it arrived there.² The 3d Army Corps had not yet begun its movements.

These were the measures taken by IId Army Headquarters based on the first information from Royal Headquarters. Before making further dispositions, more minute information and results of reconnaissance, which would undoubtedly arrive soon, could be awaited.

First, at 8.50 a.m., came a report from the extreme left wing of the army, the 12th (Royal Saxon) Corps, which had reached Jarny in the meantime without encountering the enemy. It stated:

North Labry, 8.50 a.m.³

West of Valleroy hostile artillery appears to be in position, also columns west of Valleroy, also columns north of Doncourt.

This report was in consonance with the view of H. R. H. the commander of the IId Army, that the enemy had divided his forces.

¹ A copy of this order was furnished Royal Headquarters with the additional information that the 12th Corps would halt at Jarny, the 10th at Bruville.

² At this time the 10th Corps was still at its places of bivouac, but that fact could not be perceived from the location of army headquarters.

³ The exact similarity of the date of departure of the message with the date of its receipt at IId Army Headquarters is explained by a difference in watches.

He stood in position on the heights to the right of Le Point du Jour and was now also seen on the left, according to this report. The IId Army also appeared to be in touch with hostile masses on its left wing, such as it also had in front of its right wing. Detailed reconnaissances, which undoubtedly both wing corps were making, had to be awaited.

The above report from the Crown Prince of Saxony was now declared to be incorrect by a second report which reached IId Army Headquarters at 9.30 a.m. It stated that closer reconnaissance had shown that Valleroy was not occupied by the enemy. Added thereto was that the 12th Army Corps would remain at Jarny awaiting further orders and that the Saxon cavalry would meanwhile reconnoiter the road to Briey.

Thus there appeared so far no contact with the enemy on the left wing of the army.

But, as several times stated above, since the army commander held it very probable that he would find the enemy there, he did not believe that a complete mistake had been made at first and remained convinced that reports to the same effect as the first one, which was now contradicted, might again arrive from the 12th Army Corps in its subsequent advance. Perhaps hostile troops had been in Valleroy and again disappeared.¹

To this should be added that during the time between the receipt of the first and second reports, the 9th Army Corps reported from Caulre: "its patrols sent ahead to the north and northeast had seen nothing of the enemy."² This, like prior reports, seemed to indicate that the deployment of troops of the enemy immediately west of Metz was not on a large scale.

Consequently Prince Frederick Charles believed the more that he would have to await the results of further reconnaissances to the front on the extreme left wing of the army, before fully deciding on a turn to the right.

¹In regard to this we will remark, ahead of our narrative, that as a matter of fact at least hostile *patrols* of the enemy were chased later on from the vicinity of Moineville and Valleroy.

²The report from General Manstein, cited further on concerning his arrival in Caulre, contained this information.

Shortly thereafter further orders were received from Royal Headquarters:

Unimportant skirmish fight on the right wing of the 7th Corps. The troops visible on the heights toward Metz appear to move northward, probably toward Briey. It does not appear that the 1st Army will require larger support than can be furnished by the 3d Corps from Vionville or St. Marcel.

Heights south of Flavigny, 9.20 a.m.

(Sgd.) VON MOLTKE.

The support directed to be given the 1st Army by the 3d Army Corps, in this message, could easily be arranged at any moment, as that corps stood in readiness at Vionville.

In the meantime, General von Manstein, commanding the 9th Army Corps, had reported at 9 a.m. (dated Caulre Ferme 8.30 a.m.) that he had arrived at Caulre Ferme with the 9th Army Corps and would remain concentrated there according to orders.

This halt had been provided for by the commanding general of the corps even before arrival of the last orders from army headquarters in accordance with the general march orders issued in the morning.

As stated, the 9th Army Corps had been designated by Prince Frederick Charles for the support of the 1st Army for the present. Royal Headquarters was informed thereof later on at 10.10 a.m.

Three, or possibly four, army corps of the II^d Army, then present, were still available.

They were in readiness to attack the enemy on the left flank should he actually attempt at this moment to march off from his position near Metz.

The half hour between 9.30 and 10 a.m. had now passed without any additional reports arriving from the Saxon Army Corps, while the cavalry points of that corps were known to be then far beyond Valleroy. This contradicted the suppositions held up to this that parts of Bazaine's army ought to be looked for there, and the situation now began to clear up.

Before discussing the further measures of army headquarters, which now had in view the attack on the enemy in position immediately west of Metz, we must gain a clear pic-

ture of what was actually known at the time in regard to the situation.

At the present day we are much inclined to look back on everything as being then as clear as the past years have since made the situation, and we judge the measures taken in those past hours accordingly. It is better for the proper understanding of events and is truer historically to picture to oneself as nearly as possible what was really known at that time.

The French army stood from Le Point du Jour as far as the heights of Roncourt and St. Privat, awaiting the attack in a prepared position. So far only the left wing of that position had been definitely located. On August 17th a French camp had been seen east of Gravelotte consisting of several divisions, which meant a part of, not the entire, army of Bazaine. Results of observation on the morning of August 18th showed the same. They confirmed that a few French divisions were on the heights of Le Point du Jour. The first information received from Royal Headquarters stated that the hostile right wing extended as far as Amanvillers, showing thereby the views held at those headquarters. The patrols sent from Caulre Ferme northeastward had, as is known, found nothing of the enemy. Therefore the French position did not appear to extend far to the north.

Thus IId Army Headquarters considered it most probable at that hour that the enemy stood with his right wing about at La Folie.

Consequently a French battle position on the ridge from Le Point du Jour as far as La Folie was now the objective for measures to be taken.

As stated, the IId Army had orders to envelop the hostile right wing with the 9th Army Corps and to have the Guard act as reserve to that corps.

It therefore appeared justifiable to swing these two corps to the right as far north as would bring them opposite the supposed extreme right wing of the French position. They were to march to Vernéville. From that point, should the French right be at La Folie, they could attack it in superior force in front and on the flank.

Of course proper care had to be given to the farther reconnaissance northward during the movements now to be begun. Prince Frederick Charles therefore issued the following orders:

1. To the 9th Army Corps, 10 a.m.

The corps will fall in and begin the march in the direction of Vernéville and La Folie. Should the enemy stand there with his right wing the battle will be opened for the present with a strong deployment of artillery.

2. To the Guard Corps, 10.15 a.m.

The Guard Corps will continue the march through Doncourt to Vernéville and take position there to support the 9th Army Corps, which is advancing on La Folie against the hostile right wing. Reconnaissance to the left through Amanvillers and St. Privat-la-Montagne as well as early reports are desirable.

The 12th Royal Saxon Army Corps received copies of both these orders.¹ As stated above, the Crown Prince of Saxony had added to one of his reports of that morning that he would remain in Jarny until further notice. That corps could well be held there for the present at the disposition of army headquarters since there was no room on the narrow plateau of La Folie for an attack on the enemy by a third corps in addition to the 9th and the Guard Corps. It was in proper position at Jarny also in case detachments should become necessary from the II^d Army either towards the north or northwest.

As regards its conduct in the battle the 9th Corps had been placed under the restriction for the present of opening the battle against the enemy with artillery only, but this restriction was dependent on the situation. The 9th Corps was nearest the enemy; it formed the pivot of the movements now to ensue. As conditions developed it came against the enemy not only first but also materially earlier than the wider swinging Guard Corps. It had to be prevented therefore from becoming engaged in a frontal attack against a superior hostile force prematurely and before the envelopment of the hostile right wing was completed.

¹Report also sent to Royal Headquarters, Prince Frederick Charles at the same time requesting permission to draw up the 3d Army Corps to Caulre Ferme, that corps still being at Vionville.

At this moment, while the IId Army was entering upon a new phase of activity on this day, it is well to follow up events with the various corps during the morning hours.

The advance of the IId Army early in the morning had not been without its difficulties and unforeseen obstructions.

First the 12th Army Corps found serious obstructions for the deployment of its divisions in the terrain round Mars la Tour, compelling it to defile through Mars la Tour in march columns and to take up the formation directed by Prince Frederick Charles only north of the village.¹

Only after the 12th Corps had completed its march through Mars la Tour, was the Guard Corps able to begin its march. That corps remained in the march-columns formation previously adopted, on account of the difficulties of terrain which had to be overcome in its prescribed line of advance on Doncourt. The 10th Army Corps followed at 10 a.m. and executed its advance by divisions in mass formation.

Under these conditions the IId Army did not gain ground so quickly in the morning hours as had been the intention of the army commander.

At this time, shortly after 10 a.m., the army corps were located as follows:

1. The 12th Army Corps at Jarny.²
2. The Guard Corps marching toward Doncourt.
3. The 9th Army Corps at Caulre Ferme, outposts as far as the line Bois des Genivaux—Vernéville—Bois Doseuillons.
4. The 10th Army Corps and 5th Cavalry Division at Mars la Tour—Tronville.
5. The 3d Army Corps and 6th Cavalry Division at Vionville.
6. The 2d Army Corps marching from Pont à Mousson towards Buxières.

From this position then began the turn to the right ordered, initiated by the 9th and the Guard Corps.

At this same time progress was made in the information obtained concerning the situation and intentions of the enemy.

¹The corps artillery went round on the west side of Mars la Tour.

²Its advance guard marching on both sides of the Orne, the cavalry division marching from Parfondrupt to Puxe, having left back one regiment to patrol towards the west and toward Verdun.

At the 10th Army Corps some slightly wounded of the 16th Infantry Regiment arrived from Doncourt, where they had been taken after having been captured by the enemy on August 16th. They stated that on the morning of August 17th the French had left that village in all haste—without taking them along—and retreated towards Metz. Then a report was received from an officer belonging to army headquarters who had been observing the enemy from the Bois des Ognons, stating:

Point of forest opposite Gravelotte, 10.20 a.m.

The camp now shows a changed appearance.

The largest part of the troops has retreated toward both sides without my being able to state definitely the march direction. Halfway up the slope, where headquarters camp was, a battle position has been taken. Its right wing, covered by woods, cannot be seen. At this moment lively movements of troops in northerly direction and more lively fire by outposts.

For better orientation a sketch of the French position on the heights of Le Point du Jour was added.

Soon thereafter arrived reports of the advancing corps, the first coming from the Guard Corps at Doncourt, dated 10.25:

Head of Guard Corps just arrived at Doncourt; will go into position there and await further orders.¹

Patrols sent ahead on Ste. Marie and to the road to Briey have so far reported nothing of the enemy.

Almost simultaneously therewith a report arrived from the 9th Army Corps, which had been sent in by the outposts of the 25th Infantry Division:

Heights of Batilly, 10.25 a.m.

Hostile patrols on the heights of Ste. Marie—Amanvillers, troops marching on main road, camp at St. Privat-la-Montagne, hostile patrols advancing at a trot.

The commander of the 9th Army Corps forwarded this message from Caulre Ferme at 11 a.m.

¹In the meantime, as is known, at 10.15 a.m. the order from Prince Frederick Charles had been sent for the corps to continue its march on Vernéville.

Besides these important reports a new order was received at IId Army Headquarters from His Majesty the King about the same time.

Reports received indicate that the enemy intends to hold his position on plateau between Le Point du Jour and Montigny la Grange.

Four hostile battalions have advanced into the Bois des Genivaux.

His Majesty considers it advisable to start the 12th and the Guard Corps in the direction of Batilly in order to reach the enemy at Ste. Marie aux Chênes, in case he should march toward Briey, and to attack him from the direction of Amanvillers in case he should remain on the heights. This attack would have to be made in conjunction with the Ist Army attacking from the Bois des Vaux and Gravelotte, the 9th Corps attacking towards the Bois des Genivaux and Vernéville, and the left wing of the IId Army attacking from the north.

10.30 a.m.

(Sgd.) VON MOLTKE.

The suppositions on which these orders were based were in consonance with the views obtaining at Headquarters IId Army. The patrols sent by the Guard Corps toward the main road from Briey had encountered no enemy. The 12th Corps, the main body of which was known to be at Jarny, would doubtlessly have discovered through its cavalry and reported any parts of the French army which had been on the march on the 17th toward the northwest or west.

Now all dispositions of the IId Army could, more definitely than those made at 10 and 10.15 a.m., tend towards one end, to attack in full force the enemy on the heights immediately west of Metz and beat him. All doubts had disappeared. It no longer seemed necessary to hold other forces in readiness for action in other directions, as had been the case up to this time.

The conception of the French position on which the new dispositions were based had been little changed from the one previously held.

The orders from Royal Headquarters assumed the right wing of the French position to be at Montigny la Grange. The possibility that the enemy might still attempt to march out of this position towards Briey had been considered.

The 9th Army Corps had reported a hostile camp at St. Privat. But this report was indeed not confirmed by further ones¹ and contained no indication as to whether the troops discovered there constituted a body of some tactical importance or were merely weak detachments.

The II^d Army Commander decided to have the 12th Corps, conforming to and following the right turn of the II^d Army, advance at once further north to the main Metz—Woippy—Briey highroad. Herewith he developed his intention to extend the envelopment of the hostile right wing, at least by detachments, into the valley of the Mosel north of Metz. There, at that time, lay the last secure connection of Bazaine's army with France.

In consonance with orders from Royal Headquarters the Guard Corps was to march with the 12th Army Corps toward Batilly. But as Prince Frederick Charles had already started that corps toward Vernéville by his orders of 10.15 a.m., he now directed that it proceed from there, or by executing a left oblique on its march there, without delay to Amanvillers, and from there carry out in a southerly direction its enveloping attack against the hostile wing. Should it be necessary to support this attack, for which there was but little room left on the narrow plateau at Montigny, the 12th Corps stood near enough, even though it were now directed to Ste. Marie² on the Metz—Briey road.

It now also appeared to be time to draw the corps marching in the second line, the 10th, 3d and 2d, closer up to the corps designated for the attack and to place them so that they would be at hand to support the advance of the front, as the 12th Corps remained available to support the flank attack.

¹The 9th Army Corps also reported the following between 11 and 12 o'clock:

At Caulre Ferme, 10.45 a.m.

A French laborer, living in Saargemünd and coming from Conflans, states: On Monday and Tuesday a few cavalry regiments, some infantry and artillery, coming from Metz, arrived in Conflans, marching off in the direction of Briey Wednesday morning.

Our patrols report: Jouaville not occupied, north thereof masses of troops according to statements of inhabitants. Reconnoitering patrols sent to St. Privat and Ste. Marie. It is further reported that cavalry and artillery is northeast of Vernéville.

²The distance from Ste. Marie to Amanvillers is about 5500 paces.

At 11.30 a.m. Prince Frederick Charles issued the following orders:

1. To the Royal Saxon 12th Army Corps.

The 12th Corps receives orders to march on Ste. Marie aux Chênes, to secure by cavalry towards Briey and beyond Conflans, and to send as much cavalry as practicable into the valley of the Mosel to interrupt railroad and telegraph to Thionville.

The 7th, 8th, 9th and Guard Corps will, within two hours, attack the enemy, who is in position on the heights from Leipzig to the Bois de Vaux, rear towards Metz.¹

In second line follow as support the 3d, 10th, and 12th, as well as the 2d Corps.

2. To the Guard Corps.

The enemy appears to stand in battle position on the ridge from the Bois de Vaux through Leipzig. The Guard Corps will hasten its march through Vernéville, extend it to Amanvillers, and from there advance envelopingly for a serious attack against the hostile right wing.

The 9th Corps will at the same time advance to the attack on La Folie.

The Guard Corps may also take the road through Habonville. The 12th Army Corps goes towards Ste. Marie.

3. To the 9th Army Corps.

The Guard Corps now receives orders to advance through Vernéville to Amanvillers, and from there eventually to make an enveloping attack on the hostile right wing. A serious engagement by the 9th Army Corps, in case the hostile front before it extends still farther to the north, must be delayed until the Guard Corps attacks from Amanvillers. The troops probably will still have time enough to boil coffee.

About 12 noon the following orders were also sent to the 10th and to the 2d Army Corps:

4. To the 10th Army Corps.

The enemy is in position on the heights from Leipzig to the Bois de Vaux. He will be attacked there today:

by the Guard Corps from Amanvillers,

by the 9th Corps from La Folie,

by the 7th and 8th Corps in front.

As support follow in second line:

the 12th Corps to Ste. Marie,

¹ At 9.30 a.m. the Chief of Staff of the 1st Army had come to meet Prince Frederick Charles and oriented him concerning the situation of the 1st Army.

the 10th Corps to St. Ail,
the 3d Corps to Vernéville,
the 2d Corps to Rézonville.

5. To the 2d Army Corps.

The 2d Army Corps will march from Buxières to Rézonville to serve as reserve for the right wing. The Ist and IId Armies will attack the enemy today in his position this side of Metz.

There will be time to cook, no special haste required to reach Rézonville. The Saxon Cavalry secures against Verdun.

Shortly after these orders were issued events took a rapid course.

About 12 noon the first cannon shots were fired in the vicinity of Vernéville. There the 9th Corps entered the battle. It had started from Caulre Ferme about 10.30 a.m. Its advance guard, directed through Vernéville toward La Folie, entered the battle at Chantrenne Ferme. The mass of its artillery¹ deployed northeast of Vernéville for action against the advancing French infantry and against the masses camping on the heights between Amanvillers and Montigny la Grange, and against the buildings of Champenois in front occupied by the enemy. In order to do this the corps commander shoved forward the left wing of his line of artillery nearly to the farthest corner of the Bois de la Cusse. The German shells took the French camp by surprise. But soon the enemy replied to this fire, not only from the heights of Amanvillers—Montigny la Grange, but also from the line St. Privat—Amanvillers. The further extension of the hostile line northward beyond Amanvillers could now be perceived.

The French infantry fire at long range commenced simultaneously with the answering fire of the guns and mitrailleuses and poured a hail of projectiles on the batteries of the 9th Army Corps. That corps advanced its main body for the protection of the artillery and thus was drawn into the battle.

The battle thus quickly assumed through force of circumstances much larger dimensions than had been intended.

¹The artillery of the 18th Infantry Division and the corps artillery. The artillery of the 25th Hessian Division also entered the battle very soon thereafter.

After the opening of the battle—about 12.30 p.m.—Prince Frederick Charles issued orders to the 3d Army Corps to start and then proceeded to the vicinity of Vernéville, taking his position at 1.45 p.m. on the high ground west of that village. The course of events with the 9th Army Corps now became of the utmost importance to the army leadership.

Even before the arrival of the IID Army orders of 11.30 a.m. the Guard and the 12th Corps had taken independently measures which were almost identical with those orders. Prince Frederick Charles received reports of these measures while still en route to Vernéville. The Guard Corps reported:

Doncourt, 18 August, 1870, 11.30 a.m.

According to a report from the cavalry sent out, dated hill at Batilly 10.50 a.m., inhabitants just arriving from Ste. Marie bring information that French infantry is in that village, and that many French troops are at St. Privat. Consequently the Guard Corps will immediately continue the march from Doncourt, in accordance with orders received,¹ but the commanding general believes under these conditions that he should march for the present not on Vernéville, but on Habonville.

Information of this has been sent to the 12th Army Corps.

The report from the 12th Army Corps read:

Jarny, 18 August, 11.45 a.m.

The enemy is in position at Moineville and Ste. Marie aux Chênes. The 12th Army Corps advances therefore on those two points. Flank protection towards Valleroy.

In the orders of 11.30 a.m. the Guard Corps was left discretion in regard to taking the road through Habonville²—the 12th Army Corps had received Ste. Marie as march objective. Consequently no new or different orders were required to be issued by army headquarters.

¹This refers to orders from army headquarters of 10.15 a.m.; the orders of 11.30 a.m. had not yet been received by the Guard Corps when this report was sent.

²The Guard Corps had taken the direction on Habonville with only the 1st Guard Infantry Division and the corps artillery; the 2d Guard Infantry Division, which first debouched from the first march direction to the north at Bruville, marched from the latter place through St. Marcel and Caulre Ferme to Vernéville. The army commander, who was just then riding to Vernéville, saw that division and gave it the direction on Habonville.

Concerning further observations of the enemy, the Guard Corps reported from Doncourt at 12 noon. It transmitted a report received from its cavalry:

Hill near Batilly, 11.30 a.m.

A Saxon cavalry patrol encountered near St. Ail French cavalry—10 horses. A few shots were just now fired on the road from Amanvillers to Vernéville. It appears that cavalry, about two squadrons, and infantry, about one and a half companies, are being sent in small detachments from St. Privat towards Habonville and St. Ail.

French infantry, two companies, marching to Ste. Marie. Between Ste. Marie and St. Privat a tent camp, which appears in process of being broken.

Through an officer of his staff who rode round Vernéville Prince Frederick Charles learned that French batteries were firing from close to the north side of Amanvillers but that further north toward St. Privat view was cut off by the Bois de la Cusse. Of Amanvillers, situated behind a ridge, only the church steeple was visible.

In the meantime, about 2 p.m., the Prince had sent orders to the Guard Corps artillery to advance at a trot¹ and go into position alongside, but not in immediate connection with, the artillery line of the 9th Corps.

At 2.05 p.m. the 10th Army Corps reported its arrival at Jouaville; answer was returned to that report that its task would be to turn against St. Privat—corps artillery in the lead.

Thus sufficient fighting forces could be deployed against the hostile wing extending to beyond Amanvillers.

Three corps of the II^d Army, the Guard, 10th and 12th, were available for that purpose and were already advancing, while the entire 3d Army Corps was still left as a reserve for the 9th Corps—the battle of which corps was now continually increasing in intensity.

Shortly after 2 p.m. Prince Frederick Charles proceeded through Anoux la Grange to the vicinity westward of Habonville, in order to get nearer to a solution of the important and as yet unsolved question of the location of the French right

¹This artillery had before this received the same orders from the Guard Corps.

wing. From the heights at Habonville, the strong French positions at St. Privat were seen. The conception of the French battle position now changed very decidedly.

At this second position Prince Frederick Charles received another order from Royal Headquarters. This was dated, heights south of Flavigny, 1.45 p.m. and contained the following:

The 9th Army Corps is already engaged in an artillery combat in front of the Bois Doseuillons.

The strong general attack along the entire line will not take place until material fighting forces can advance from Amanvillers.

It was evident that events with the 9th Army Corps had by this time developed so far that the corps could not now be ordered to remain in a waiting attitude. In this corps contact with the enemy alone could regulate the conduct of the troops.

The Guard Corps, on the other hand, which had arrived in the vicinity of Habonville at 1 p.m.¹ was as yet entirely free and not bound down by any engagement. It received orders:

To carry on the battle with artillery only and not to engage the infantry until the 12th Army Corps could effectively enter the action.

Since by this time the further extension of the French position as far as St. Privat² was seen and its extraordinary strength perceived, it appeared important that the attack of the Guard and of the 12th Corps, as well as that of the 10th Corps, according to need, should be made simultaneously, there being enough space here for the utilization of large masses.

Of course in view of the greater frontal extension of the enemy the destination of the several corps changed.

The Guard Corps, thus far designed for enveloping the hostile right wing, had now to prolong the German main front opposed to the French. The 12th (Royal Saxon) Corps alone now remained available for that envelopment. By in-

¹The advance guard had arrived there between 12 noon and 1 p.m.

²As is now known, it extended still further to Roncourt, but that could not be perceived from Habonville.

serting the 10th Corps between these two corps the movement could to some extent be facilitated and supported.

A meeting between Prince Frederick Charles and the commanding general of the Guard Corps gave an opportunity in conference to make the latter more conversant with the intentions of Royal Headquarters and those of the II^d Army commander.

Before pursuing further the course of events, it appears desirable to state briefly the situations of the various corps of the army between 2 and 3 p.m.

1. The 9th Army Corps was engaged in battle against the hostile center Amanvillers—La Folie.¹

2. The Guard Corps was concentrating at St. Ail and Habonville (the whole 2d Guard Infantry Division was assembled there at 2.45 p.m.)

The mass of the artillery of the corps was already engaged southwest of St. Ail, its left wing touching that village, firing intermittently on the hostile positions at St. Privat. To that point the line of battle, as indicated by the powder smoke, had quickly been prolonged.

St. Ail was occupied by the corps and the advance guard of the 1st Infantry Division took direction toward Ste. Marie aux Chênes, to which point the enemy had towards 12 noon advanced parts of his right wing.

3. The 12th (Royal Saxon) Army Corps was advancing toward the line Ste. Marie—Moineville. Its columns were in sight north of Batilly.

4. The 3d Army Corps was just entering Vernéville.

5. The 10th Army Corps arrived at Batilly at 2 p.m. and there halted.

6. The 2d Army Corps was on the march, the 3d Infantry Division and corps artillery from Buxières, the 4th

¹ In front of the artillery line of the corps the enemy maintained himself in Ferme Champenois until about 3 p.m. At 3 o'clock that farm was captured.

Infantry Division from Onville,¹ in the direction of Rézonville.

First began the battle for the possession of Ste. Marie, which the enemy, as just stated, held in front of his line. There the left wing of the Guard Corps was to be seen entering the battle, as was plainly visible from the position of the army commander. Saxon batteries were also seen firing on Ste. Marie from the edge of the ravine running from Habonville to Auboué.²

Both corps reported the measures taken by them.
The Guard Corps reported:

Behind St. Ail, 18. August, 1870, 2 p.m.

The infantry of the advance guard of the Guard Corps is engaged in battle in and at St. Ail against Ste. Marie, which is strongly held by hostile infantry. The corps artillery on the right is firing on St. Privat. The main body of the 1st Guard Infantry Division is just now advancing on St. Ail. The 2d Guard Division, now arrived at Habonville, will advance. The 12th Corps is marching on Ste. Marie, but not yet near.³

The 12th (Royal Saxon) Army Corps reported as follows:

Batilly, 18 August, 2.30 p.m.

The Saxon Army Corps advances with the 24th Infantry Division on Ste. Marie aux Chênes and envelops the French right wing with the 23d Infantry Division by Coinville and the little woods between there and Roncourt.

(Sgd.) ALBERT

The Crown Prince of Saxony, having reached Batilly, had been able to perceive the extension of the hostile position beyond St. Privat north to Roncourt and also its frontal

¹The division had halted at Onville, since at Buxières to which point it had been directed by order of army headquarters, there was no water and no cooking could be done. However the 4th Infantry Division did not have any chance to cook, as it soon resumed the march.

²The Saxon artillery had been preparing the attack on Ste. Marie since 2.30 p.m. West of the ravine stood nine, east of it four batteries, their right wing on the St. Ail—Ste. Marie road. There was some doubt at Headquarters IId Army as to the fire of those batteries for quite a long time, whether or not it would endanger the Guard troops which appeared already to have entered the village. Officers sent out cleared up the situation.

³This had occurred, however, by the time the report was received

strength, in view of which he had independently taken the measures indicated in his report.

From the location of the army commander at Habonville the French lines could be seen only as far as St. Privat. There, as stated, the enemy's right wing was believed to be. The measures taken by the Crown Prince of Saxony were the first indication that that wing extended still farther northward.

The report had reached army headquarters at 3 p.m.

In the meantime the fight round Ste. Marie progressed with rapid strides; the village was soon taken by troops of both corps engaged.¹

A short report of this fact was sent to army headquarters as follows:

Ste. Marie Captured.

3.30 p.m. Losses small. 18/8. 72.

(Sgd.) VON PAPE²

As soon as this report reached the army commander he wrote to the Crown Prince of Saxony:

18. August, 3.45 p.m., at Habonville.

I call Your Royal Highness' attention to the fact that the only communication of the beaten French army with Paris lies in the valley of the Mosel on the left bank.

It is therefore of the utmost importance for the decision of the campaign that cavalry be sent by Your Royal Highness as soon as possible to destroy thoroughly the railroad and telegraph Metz—Thionville and, if possible, occupy the valley of the Mosel.

(Sgd.) FREDERICK CHARLES

P.S. Everything goes well so far, thank God.

The capture of Ste. Marie was a separate action preceding the decision on the hostile right wing.³

The artillery alone now continued the battle.

¹ 47th Infantry Brigade and advance guard of the Guard Corps.

² Commander of the 1st Guard Infantry Division.

³ At 11.30 a.m. a General Staff officer of the 12th Army Corps found Ste. Marie still unoccupied. Shortly thereafter the 6th French Corps sent the 94th Line Regiment to that place.

The Saxon batteries took up a second position north of Ste. Marie aux Chênes and from there opened fire anew.¹

The great line of artillery of the Guard Corps, at that time strengthened to 72 guns,² advanced toward 4 p.m. from its position Habonville—St. Ail towards St. Privat la Montagne. The hostile batteries succumbed very quickly under a hot artillery fire. Neither opposite the Guard nor the 9th Army Corps was the French artillery able to hold its own. Between 4 and 5 p.m. it became silent along the whole line from St. Privat to Montigny la Grange³.

The decisive hours of the battle seemed to approach, a general attack to be well prepared by now.

In accordance with the intentions of the King, the commanding general of the Guard Corps, Prince August of Württemberg, had suspended the further infantry attack after the capture of Ste. Marie. The envelopment of the hostile right wing by the 12th Corps was first to become effective. But now his conception of the situation changed in a decisive manner.

Not only had the 12th (Royal Saxon) Army Corps discovered through reconnaissance the extension of the hostile position north as far as Roncourt, but it had also received reports (by cavalry patrols of the Guard Corps) that Montois la Montagne was also occupied by the French. The Crown Prince of Saxony therefore reinforced the 23d Infantry Division, which carried on the envelopment, by one infantry brigade and the available cavalry.⁴ To keep the envelopment as much concealed from the enemy as possible with good prospects of decisive results, it had to be made under the protection of the steep hill ridge west of Montois, in the

¹66 guns were put into position there; 6 others participated in the firing from time to time.

²5 batteries of the corps artillery, 4 of the 1st Guard Infantry Division, 3 of the 2d Guard Infantry Division. Two of the Guard Cavalry Division arrived later, so that by that time 84 guns were in action.

³The extreme right wing of the French artillery line at Roncourt was still firing, but that, as noted above, it was impossible to see from Prince Frederick Charles' position.

⁴ 48th Infantry Brigade and 2d Cavalry Regiment of the 24th Infantry Division, Guard and 3d Cavalry Regiment with the 1st Horse Battery of the 12th Cavalry Division.

Orne valley, passing close to Joeuf. This road was assigned by the commander of the 23d Infantry Division (Prince George of Saxony) to the reinforcements sent him.

Thus it naturally took longer than had been expected for the effect of the envelopment to be felt by the enemy. About 5 p.m., that is after the fire of the hostile artillery between St. Privat and Amanvillers had died out, the enveloping columns of the 12th Army Corps were with their leading elements opposite Hautmécourt.¹

Three hours of daylight could still be counted on for the action. It was questionable now if it would be possible to execute the combined attack intended. An attack beginning late could easily remain without result. The nearness of approaching darkness undoubtedly would have increased the energy of the defense, in any case it precluded all pursuit. The silence of the hostile artillery appeared to favor the offensive; in 1½–2 hours the situation might easily be an entirely different one. The condition of the battle on the other points of the battlefield made the beginning of the attack against the hostile right wing very desirable. Movements of troops could be perceived on the side of the enemy on the heights of St. Privat. It appeared as though new masses went from there to the vicinity of Amanvillers—Montigny la Grange. Moreover as early as 4.30 p.m. the army commander had been compelled to place at the disposal of the 9th Corps the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade² until then retained at his dis-

¹ The individual parts of the 12th Army Corps at 5.15 p.m. were at the following points:

1. The 47th Infantry Brigade, forming the pivot for the movements of the corps, was at Ste. Marie aux Chênes. After Ste. Marie had been captured this brigade had at first advanced east beyond the village, but was then taken back.

2. The 45th Infantry Brigade stood in the woods west of Roncourt in battle with French outposts of the right wing behind those woods.

3. The 48th Infantry Brigade with the available cavalry (13 squadrons) and 4 batteries, was on the march to Montois with its leading elements at that time south of Hautmécourt.

4. The 46th Infantry Brigade with one battery was on the march from Moineville to Coinville.

5. The corps artillery, reinforced by the 2d Foot Artillery Battalion (11 batteries) under guard of one squadron stood north of Ste. Marie firing on Roncourt.

6. One battalion, 10 squadrons were on detached service of various kinds.

² 7 battalions, 1 pioneer company, 1 battery.

positional. The corps artillery of the 3d Corps was already supporting the combat there by order of the Prince. It had gone into a position between Vernéville and the Bois des Genivaux. In spite of everything the condition of things was precarious.

However, no doubt was entertained but that the effect of the 12th Army Corps would make itself felt during the course of the attack on St. Privat, even if not at the beginning of it. Therefore the participation of this army corps was not at all left out of consideration by taking up the offensive attack now.

The commanding general of the Guard Corps decided to attack St. Privat and Prince Frederick Charles gave his consent.

At that time the Prince could not see what caused the 12th Army Corps to describe so large an arc. The Saxon batteries remained in their position north of Ste. Marie in action¹ without their target being ascertained.² It appeared almost as if the corps were in touch with an opponent who had appeared on its left flank, preventing it from advancing rapidly against the enemy's right.

Prince Frederick Charles, however, cherished the conviction that the battle had to be decided in any case on August 18th. It appeared impossible, after such large sacrifices as had already been made, to delay this to the following day. Had the enemy been left in his position that evening, he would have been able to fall back under the protection of the forts of Metz by a short night march. In that case there would be an almost intact army in Metz and the situation confronting the German leadership would then be a very difficult one.

Regard for our own troops also demanded earnest consideration. The series of bloody battles begun on August 14th must now be brought to an end.

¹ These were the 66 Saxon guns which fired on Roncourt, from the right wing also on St. Privat.

² As a matter of fact the Saxon artillery (11 batteries) was advancing at this time by echelons against Roncourt, a movement which, as the firing was constant, could not be observed from the vicinity of Habonville. Five batteries of the 12th Army Corps participated in the enveloping movement.

About 5.30 p.m. the Guard Corps advanced against St. Privat la Montagne with the 1st Guard Infantry Division astride the Ste. Marie—St. Privat road and with the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade¹ from the vicinity of Habonville. The direction for the advancing masses was the village situated on the bare heights and consisting of large massive buildings.

Under the enemy's murderous fire the battalions ascended the sloping heights which, like a glacis, slope down from the village toward the line Ste. Marie—St. Ail and toward Habonville. Only here and there was some unimportant protection offered by basins or folds in the terrain.

The nearer the troops approached the plainer could be seen the strength of the hostile position. For the utilization of fire effect the enemy was in a situation than which none better could be imagined in any campaign. He had in addition prepared his position with that same speed and skill in fortifying, which he demonstrated throughout the late war. The walls were loopholed and the crest of the heights lined with trenches. Consequently the defending troops showed themselves to have been less shaken than was assumed to be the case. The preparatory fire of the artillery had up to that time been directed on the hostile batteries and the battle with these had occupied its full attention. The village of St. Privat and its defenders had thus far not suffered from the artillery fire. With fresh forces the garrison stood behind its unexcelled cover.

The losses of the Guards charging with rare bravery increased rapidly to an alarming extent. The lines of advance of the attacking columns were marked by heaps of dead and wounded.

The attack became more and more precarious and bloody until it finally came to a standstill. The excellent discipline inherent in these troops made it possible, however, to hold them steadfast close to the enemy.

Thereby was the way shortened for the subsequent rush.

During this hot battle the 12th Army Corps kept on its course. After a long march its left wing, the 48th Infantry

¹ The 4th Guard Infantry Brigade started about 15 minutes earlier than the 1st Guard Infantry Division.

Brigade, ascended the ridge near Montois la Montagne at 6 p.m. The village was found clear of the enemy.¹ The enveloping attack on Roncourt was then started.

During the course of the envelopment the 45th Infantry Brigade in front had driven hostile advanced troops from the woods between Auboué and Roncourt and then waited for the appearance of the 48th Infantry Brigade at Montois. The latter now also emerged into the open and by a steady advance pressed back the hostile skirmish lines in front of Roncourt. In the village itself, where the heads of both brigades met, no actual engagement took place.² The fire of the artillery which had advanced with the infantry had already produced such an effect on the enemy's troops that they evacuated the village. Shortly before 6.30 p.m. the village was occupied by the 12th Army Corps which now deployed large forces from the north against St. Privat.^{3 4}

The moment had now come for renewing the attack.

H. R. H. the army commander also ordered the 10th Army Corps, the commander of which had come to Habonville between 4.45 and 5 p.m. to receive verbal orders, to support the advance of the Guard Corps.

The 10th Army Corps advanced from Batilly toward St. Ail and first sent the horse batteries of its corps artillery ahead to support the Guard batteries. The combined attack of parts of all three corps of the German left wing against St. Privat was now carried out, having been substantially prepared by the previous advance of the Guard Corps.⁵

¹A battalion of the 23d Infantry Division posted at the northeast corner of the woods between Auboué and Montois had, between 5 and 6 o'clock, been engaged in a fire fight at long range with the French troops then in Montois.

²See Note 5.

³The 45th and 48th Infantry Brigades and the entire artillery, which advanced on the village to within 1,200 paces.

⁴A few infantry regiments had executed a right turn before reaching the heights of Roncourt and were then, at the time that Roncourt was being attacked, advancing independently against St. Privat.

⁵The advance of the Guard worked together with the attack by the 12th Army Corps in so far as the former induced the 6th Corps of Canrobert, on the French right wing, to concentrate its forces at St. Privat to meet the attack and thus weakened the garrison at Roncourt,

The artillery of the Guard Corps which, as stated above, was busy silencing the hostile batteries up to the time of the first attack, now turned its entire activity against the village of St. Privat.

From the location of army headquarters it was clearly seen that the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade now began a renewed attack. On the heights south of the village, following the crest, ran a road with a high hedge on one side. Looked at from Habonville and judging the terrain from the map, this hedge gave the impression of being the edge of the forests on the high left bank of the valley of the Mosel. There the battalions of the charging brigade disappeared and at the same time the right wing of the 1st Guard Infantry Division was seen ascending the heights directly at the village. Dense powder smoke then hid the scene of battle. But the fire of a strong artillery line between Roncourt and St. Privat indicated shortly thereafter the interference of the 12th (Royal Saxon) Army Corps.

The victory seemed there to be decisive. Prince Frederick Charles then deliberated once more on the extension of the envelopment of the hostile right wing as far as the

thereby materially assisting the advance of the 12th Corps and its decisive attack on the flank.

Quesnoy, Armée du Rhin, page 76:

"It was about six o'clock; we saw then opposite the 4th Corps a thick column of dust rising above the woods and advancing towards St. Privat; this dust could be produced only by artillery at a gallop. Each of us understood that we were going to receive the shock of the last moment according to Prussian tactics. In fact this artillery was not long in getting into battery opposite the right of the 4th Corps, resting on the left of the 6th. Formidable detonations

"The left of the 6th Corps then made a retrograde movement which gradually increased. But the right, led by its chief, marched resolutely against the village of St. Privat itself which strong columns were striving to carry and repulsed these vigorously with considerable loss. The Prussian artillery then directed the fire of its pieces on the village itself which immediately took fire at several points. Three of our batteries tried to establish themselves there to reply to it, but were not able to do so, and as it became impossible to hold this position retreat was ordered and was made by echelons, the right supported by the 100th of the line and the movements of the cavalry of Generals du Barail and de Bruchard."

valley of the Mosel. At 6.40 p.m. he wrote to the Crown Prince of Saxony:¹

In spite of isolated infantry counter attacks of the enemy² the battle appears to have been won. It is of the utmost importance, notwithstanding the great fatigue of the infantry, to advance still today on Woippy with at least one infantry brigade of the 12th Corps, to make sure of interrupting there the railroad and telegraph.

(Sgd.) FREDERICK CHARLES.

The occupation of Woippy, could that have been accomplished, would have been of the utmost importance, as thereby the retreat of the French troops still fighting on the heights of Amanvillers would have been seriously threatened. But the assault and capture of the heights south of St. Privat along which the hedge road ran had to be accomplished before the village could be captured.

The Crown Prince of Saxony reported back to Prince Frederick Charles:

August 18, 7.10 p.m.

The cavalry has already received orders to interrupt the railroad at Hagondange and Richemont. In addition cavalry with pioneers on wagons has been sent out for the same purpose through Briey.³

As St. Privat has not yet been taken and as the road is therefore not open, the brigade will be sent through Roncourt and Marange to Mézières.⁴

(Sgd.) ALBERT,
Crown Prince, General of Infantry.

¹This order was written at the Bois de la Cusse.

²These took place at that time especially at the Bois de la Cusse opposite the 9th Army Corps.

³About 4 p.m. two squadrons of the 12th Cavalry Division started from Auboué, following the Orne valley, to Richemont and the railroad depot of Uckange, about four miles south of Thionville and there destroyed late in the evening the Metz—Thionville railroad, without having encountered any enemy there or on the way back. Many obstructions placed on the road made the march so difficult that the squadrons were frequently compelled to dismount and march in single file. The pioneer detachment, sent by wagon between 4 and 5 p.m. to Mercy le Bas, reached the Thionville—Longuyon railroad there at 2.30 a.m. August 19th (after having covered 16 to 20 miles). Destruction was hastened, because of a military train being signalled from Thionville. All villages passed by the detachment were found free of the enemy. Details of this expedition became known to army headquarters only the next day, of course.

⁴As a matter of fact the 12th Corps was unable to send off this brigade until early on August 19th.

It had now become nearly dark and the moment had arrived for the utilization of the last available reserves for the final decision.

Toward 7 p.m. Prince Frederick Charles had offered to General von Manstein as reinforcements an infantry brigade of the 3d Army Corps. At 7.10 p.m. he allowed the commanding general of that corps, after repeated requests, to have the remaining three brigades also take part in the battle to the right of the Bois de la Cusse.

At 7.15 p.m. he sent orders to the commanding general of the 10th Army Corps to advance according to his own views, Prince Frederick Charles merely informing him that he considered it best for one division to take part between the Guard and the 12th Army Corps and for the other division to proceed as reserve to behind the left wing of the 9th Corps.

In the meantime this order had been anticipated by the 10th Corps which had already taken part in the battle around St. Privat.

The 2d Army Corps had reported at 6.30 p.m. that it had been in readiness with its 3d Infantry Division since 4 p.m., its 4th Division since 6 p.m., to take part in the battle and this corps was directed by Prince Frederick Charles to report directly to Royal Headquarters for orders. Now, however, at 7.20 p.m., Prince Frederick Charles left it to the discretion of the commanding general whether he should also quickly take part in the action and if so to report that fact to the King.

Events, however, had also taken their course in the 2d Army Corps.

The army commander had at this time turned his attention to the 9th Army Corps fighting in the center and had proceeded to the Bois de la Cusse where the battle was raging undecided from one side to the other. But at the time the last orders to the Crown Prince of Saxony were sent, he had once more returned to his former location at Habonville. The powder smoke still hid the heights of St. Privat. But the decisive victory soon made itself known by the turn to the right of the large artillery line of the Guard Corps

and of the corps artillery of the 10th Army Corps, alongside of which the Saxon batteries soon appeared between St. Privat and the forest. The flash of single pieces exactly pointed out the location of the line, which was almost at a right angle to the former position of the batteries. The fire was directed against the flank of the French center at Amanvillers.

The French right wing had been unable to hold out against the concentric attack. After a bloody battle the Guard Corps and the 12th Army Corps had broken into St. Privat from the west, north and south. In addition to the corps artillery the 20th Infantry Division of the 10th Army Corps had followed in support of the Guard Corps and parts of that division participated in the fight within the village. Between 7.30 and 8 p.m. the last resistance in the houses and gardens was overcome. The enemy's columns fled toward Metz followed by the fire of the German batteries.¹ In the meantime the left wing of the 12th Army Corps² had succeeded in taking the edge of the forest of Jaumont as well as the quarries of Jaumont and now pursued the enemy toward Bronvaux. But the enemy held with strong forces the edge of the forest straight across the St. Privat-Saulny road. French batteries were still in action here after dark.

When Prince Frederick Charles was firmly convinced from the movement of the artillery that the envelopment and destruction of the hostile right wing was practically complete, he again returned to the 9th Army Corps.

If he could succeed at this moment in driving back the enemy's center at Amanvillers, the day's results must be great in spite of the approaching darkness.

The advance of the Guard Corps against St. Privat had been the signal for the 9th Corps to assume the offensive. As stated above, the hostile artillery opposite the 9th Corps was all but silent at that time. The corps commander informed the army commander of this fact as well as that the battle at that time seemed favorable and that ground was

¹The batteries of the 19th Infantry Division also found here an opportunity of participating in the battle.

²Battalions of the 48th Infantry Brigade.

being gained.¹ In conjunction with the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade, placed at the disposal of General von Manstein, the corps now advanced to the attack against the heights of Amanvillers. But the enemy offered the most stubborn resistance and even made counter attacks. At this time, when the army commander had returned for the second time to the battlefield of the 9th Army Corps, the rifle fire was exceedingly heavy. Only after the darkness was complete was the terrain west of Amanvillers taken after a bloody battle. The right wing of the 9th Corps, at the Bois des Genivaux, did not succeed in completely overcoming the enemy. There the battle raged in a large clearing in front of Chantrenne. The enemy undertook there also repeated counter attacks, but was defeated in each instance.

The 3d Army Corps, as stated above, had supported with its artillery the battle of the 9th Army Corps.²

As soon as the entrance of the infantry of the corps into the action had been authorized, General von Alvensleben had concluded to lead forward the remaining parts of his corps in order here also to bring events to a head by a final offensive executed with as much force as possible. However, reports from his right flank caused him to delay. At that very moment the battle had suddenly increased in intensity farther on the right in front of the 1st Army. Reports reaching the 3d Army Corps from that point led to the assumption that the enemy was attempting offensive movements on his left wing, as was actually the case at Moscou—Le Point du Jour, and he therefore directed the force of his attack towards the Bois des Genivaux. General von Alvensleben further paused in his movement, already begun, so as to have the forces of his corps readily disposable for meeting and defeating that probable attack. Before the situation cleared, the very short time remaining before complete darkness set in had elapsed and the battle came to a close also in the center.

The 2d Army Corps also had by this time entered the battle on the right wing of the German line of battle, where

¹Through a General Staff officer of army headquarters, who was then with General von Manstein.

²The corps artillery of the 3d Corps, brought up first, had been reinforced during the course of the battle by 10 batteries.

parts of the Ist Army had been fighting since noon against the French positions at Le Point du Jour, Moscou and Leipzig.

This corps had, as it reported, reached Rézonville in the afternoon after having marched twenty miles. At that place it received toward evening direct orders from His Majesty the King to advance as far as Gravelotte, to be able there to participate in supporting the Ist Army. First a part of its artillery entered the battle; after it began to get dark the corps advanced for an infantry attack on the heights of Le Point du Jour, His Majesty having given his approval therefor.

This action of the corps therefore falls within the sphere of events of the Ist Army.¹

The interference of the 2d Army Corps had given at that place, during the final stage of the battle, the great intensity to the fight, which had been perceived by the 3d Corps and which had increased in that corps the expectation of the hostile offensive and caused the decisions arrived at to be changed.

At 8.30 p.m. the battle of the IId Army had ceased; only here and there were some single shots heard. Dense darkness covered the battlefield, dispelled only in places by the light of burning villages.

Prince Frederick Charles now issued the following orders:

On the battlefield, 18. August, 1870, 8.30 p.m.

The army corps will bivouac on the places where they find themselves at the conclusion of the battle. Infantry outposts will be placed out which will have to take up connection with neighboring corps and be prepared to have a desperate enemy try to cut his way through.

At 5 a.m. tomorrow the chiefs of staff of all five corps will be in Caulre on the road to report to His Royal Highness where the corps are located and receive orders.

The attention of the 12th Army Corps is again called to the importance of reaching Woippy.

Army Headquarters will pass the night in Doncourt.

(Sgd.) FREDERICK CHARLES.

After issuing these orders Prince Frederick Charles rode to Doncourt.

The losses of the IId Army² on August 18th amounted to

¹See von Schell, Operations of the Ist Army under General von Steinmetz.

²Probably a misprint for "German Army".—Trsl.

818 officers and 19,759 men killed, wounded and missing (1 officer, 939 men missing).¹ Of this loss the II^d Army had 617 officers and 15,711 men—inclusive of the 2^d Army Corps, which on the battlefield of the 1st Army at St. Hubert lost 45 officers and 1311 men. The Guard Corps bore half of that loss, 288 officers and 7831 men. Two pieces of the 9th Army Corps fell into the enemy's hands during the advance of the artillery to the Bois de la Cusse.

But with these great losses a splendid victory had been achieved, the extent of which could be seen as early as the evening of August 18th in the unfavorable strategical situation in which the enemy's army found itself after its defeat.

¹Only a small part of this number had fallen into the enemy's hands.

From My Diary

BY

L. VON WITTICH

*Major General Commanding the 49th Brigade
25th (Hessian) Division¹*

17TH AUGUST. The Division was assembled in a bivouac north of Gorze. In order to get out of the woods and reach this place it had been necessary to follow foot-paths which had to be widened by infantry fatigue parties. We crossed that part of the battlefield where the 11th Regiment of Infantry had attempted an assault on a strong position defended by the French Guard.

Half of the day passed before my orderlies, with my horses and equipment, were able to rejoin; they had remained at Gorze and had lost track of us. Meanwhile the men, having constructed little shacks, proceeded to refreshing ablutions in the open air. His Majesty the King, having finished his reconnaissance, crossed our bivouac. He had the kindness to ask me for an account of what we had done the day before and said "Today it is a matter of resting: tomorrow it will be more serious."

The great camps of the enemy round Gravelotte were spread out before our eyes.

The 3d Infantry Regiment was on outpost.

18TH AUGUST. The 25th Division, after a short march from its bivouac, was assembled south of Caulre facing the Metz—Doncourt road. Farther to the right stood the 18th Division. Between Vionville and Rezonville we crossed a

¹ Published at Cassel, 1872. The dedication of this work to his brave companions in arms of the 22d and 25th Divisions is dated at Cassel, 25 November, 1871.

part of the battlefield of the 16th where a hard cavalry contest must have taken place.

The advance guard of the division was composed of the 25th Cavalry Brigade (Major General von Schlotheim), the horse battery, the 4th Infantry Regiment, two Jäger Battalions and two batteries. The main body, under my command, comprised the 1st, 2d and 3d Infantry Regiments, the 1st Jäger Battalion and three batteries, that is, seven battalions and three batteries.

The 3d Infantry Regiment, on outpost, had to remain where it was and follow the movement only after the whole division had gone beyond the outpost line. That is why it arrived a little late.

At Caulre they were already preparing to bivouac and make soup when the order arrived to march immediately on Verneville.

The division started at 11.30 o'clock. The main body followed the advance guard without distance in the following order: the three batteries under Major von Herget, 3d Infantry Regiment, 1st Jäger Battalion, 2d Infantry Regiment. The batteries marched battery front, the infantry in column of attack, battalion after battalion.

On our approach to Verneville the artillery battle began on the other side of that village. The batteries of the main body were drawn into it. The infantry of the main body received orders to oblique to the left so as to gain the west edge of the woods where the 25th Cavalry Brigade had gone. According to information furnished by the advance guard, the woods of la Cusse were occupied by the 2d Jäger Battalion. The enemy was holding the heights of Amanvillers, St. Privat, Marie-aux-Chênes.

After having reached the western edge of the woods I had the infantry of the main body form east of Jouaville and south of Habonville under cover of a projecting corner of the woods, each regiment in two lines. The 3d regiment, which was nearest the woods, moved forward the wing companies of the first line and occupied with its skirmishers the northern edge of this corner of woods. The shells of the enemy were falling from time to time in this place. By orders of the corps commander the main body took position

farther forward, with directions to make a vigorous offensive in the direction of Habonville—Amanvillers as soon as the Guard advanced on our left to attack Marie-aux-Chênes and St. Privat.

Soon the 3d Infantry Regiment was taken from the main body by the division commander who assigned it a special mission in the woods of la Cusse. The other five battalions were placed between the railroad and woods, which because of recent cutting were readily passable, in such manner that the line of the 2d Infantry Regiment was prolonged on its left by the 1st, extending as far as the railroad cut. Each regiment was formed in two lines by half battalions and thus ready at once to take up the offensive. The 1st Jäger Battalion remained in reserve behind the western corner of the woods of la Cusse. Close to these woods was, besides, the 4th regiment still intact which had formed part of the advance guard.

Although the battalions were in extended order and the men lying down so as to avoid hostile observation, they suffered in this place many losses from shell fire, the long range chassepots, and even mitrailleuses, the shots from which reached them from Amanvillers over the woods of la Cusse. One of the first shells killed Major Lautenberger, of the 1st Jäger Battalion in reserve. Soon after a shell burst near corps headquarters which was behind the brigade and mortally wounded Major von Doering, Adjutant of the corps commander and Lieut. Moeller, Adjutant of the Division. I myself was obliged to dismount, my horse having been seriously hurt in the nostrils by a piece of shell which cut the bridle. Thus I remained for a time on foot. Another horse was brought to me in about an hour, just as I had mounted the horse of one of my orderlies who had been seriously wounded.

Though the Guard had engaged its artillery the advance of its infantry was delayed beyond all expectations.

Towards 2 o'clock the 1st Jäger Battalion was, by orders from higher headquarters, sent to the east side of the woods of la Cusse to support the artillery. Later, towards 3 o'clock, the 1st battalion of the 2d Regiment had also to be sent thither. These two battalions maintained there, at the cost

of considerable losses, glorious combats, crowned with success, after other troops had not sufficed to protect the artillery. At this moment the Grenadier Brigade of the Guard, the 3d Infantry Brigade (Colonel Knappe von Knappstäedt), Alexander and Elizabeth Regiments, and the Guard Rifle Battalion, passed behind our position coming from the west and moved toward the eastern edge of the woods of la Cusse.

Thus I had remaining at my disposal only three battalions, the two battalions of the 1st Infantry Regiment and the 2d Battalion of the 2d Regiment. These three battalions I moved close to the woods of la Cusse as far as the railroad cut, forming them in company columns one behind the other. On the left of the head of the column was the Hessian Battery Reh which, with the few pieces still serviceable, was doing excellent work both on the thick firing line in the meadow south of St. Privat and also on a sunken road in the direction of Amanvillers, from which hostile columns were trying to debouch but were each time prevented from so doing by some well directed shells fired by the Battery Reh.

The deep railroad cut, fenced in on each side by scarcely visible wires, ends about fifty paces from the right of the corner of the wood and the road then continues towards Amanvillers on a fill about 15 feet high. The fill and cut were enfiladed by the fire of the enemy. The edge of the woods was occupied by the 2d Jäger Battalion and the 3d Infantry Regiment. Many men had flattened themselves against the sides of the fill and were there mistakenly seeking shelter from the projectiles.

Towards 4 o'clock, when the Guard made its attack at our left, I gave orders to cross the railroad and take position beyond in rear of a little wood, front toward Amanvillers. The leading company of the 2d Infantry Regiment was surprised by a heavy fire from the mitrailleuses in position near Amanvillers. The losses were insignificant, but it was necessary to offset the moral effect produced. Colonel Kraus, the regimental commander, himself quickly restored order in the company which had crossed the railroad. I had the detachments following stopped temporarily, and then had them cross this dangerous point by platoons at a run.

Thus was the crossing well executed, in spite of the depth of the cut and the steepness of the banks, by the 2d Battalion of the 2d Infantry Regiment and two companies of the 1st Infantry Regiment. I then received from the division commander orders to halt. Six companies were on the other side of the cut, six companies on the near side. The terrain beyond was favorable and Colonel Kraus profited by it to engage the hostile firing line posted northwest of Amanvillers in order thus to assure our batteries better protection. Our batteries were then able to continue with success their fire on the hostile position.

Towards about 6 o'clock, the infantry of the Guard advanced on my left against St. Privat la Montagne in admirable order. Its right wing came under a terrible fire and the ranks were thinning rapidly; this wing was not able to progress farther and remained halted. I then received permission to move forward. The rest of the 1st Battalion of the 1st Infantry Regiment under Major Anschütz crossed the railroad; the 2d Battalion under Major Hahn followed along the fill and crossed farther to the east. It was there that Major Hahn fell. The three battalions advanced to the attack on Amanvillers; at the same time the Grenadier Brigade, von Knappe, was making an attack east of the woods of la Cusse.

Under a hail of bullets, the three battalions of the main body managed to get as far as the house of the crossing-keeper; a few companies advanced abreast of the skirmishers of the Guard as far as the sunken road which leads to Amanvillers. As enormous losses had stopped the attack of the Guard, the companies which had penetrated into the sunken road were obliged to fall back on the battalions behind the house of the crossing-keeper. Major Hoffmann quickly gathered a half battalion of the 2d Regiment; I myself formed a column of about 150 scattered skirmishers from both regiments and led it forward to attempt a new attack against Amanvillers in conjunction with Major Hoffmann. But these forces were insufficient, too isolated, and, not having any fresh troops, I was obliged to content myself with the defense of the favorable position near the house of the crossing-keeper. During the rallying of the disbanded

men and their march forward not a single one of them was wounded. My horse had one of his fore feet grazed by a bullet but it did not disable him for service. Going once more to the Battery Reh, I missed my orderly, Fleck. My adjutant discovered his horse at the corner of the woods. With the firm conviction that Fleck must be either killed or wounded we went over to it; there it was, in the most dangerous place, tied to a tree and its rider, who had lost sight of me in all these goings and comings, was lying there —asleep.

Night now fell and the fire ceased on our side. I went to the corps and division commanders to give a personal account of the situation. H. R. H. Prince Frederick Charles also joined us. Firing was no longer heard except far to the right. The battle was won. The 4th Infantry Regiment, whose colonel, Zwenger, had been mortally wounded while in reserve, and the 25th Cavalry Brigade were charged with the service of security and pursuit. The battalions of the 49th Infantry Brigade were brought back to the west side of the woods of la Cusse, behind the railroad, where they bivouacked.

Losses of the 1st and 2d Regiments and 1st Jäger Battalion:

Killed	10 officers, 124 men, 4 horses.
Wounded	31 officers, 743 men, 4 horses.
Missing	0 officers, 20 men, 0 horses.
Total	41 officers, 887 men, 9 horses.

Military Correspondence

OF

Prince KRAFT ZU HOHENLOHE-INGLEFINGEN¹

Extract from 4th Letter on Cavalry

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ON the 17th of August the Uhlan Brigade of the Guard cavalry proceeded to St. Mihiel on the Meuse and reconnoitered from there still farther to the west. All German corps between the Meuse and Mosel could on that day change, in perfect security, their march direction from west to north and hasten to the support of the corps which had been engaged on the 16th of August, for that cavalry had been advanced so far westward that a possible annoying interference of the enemy from the west would be known two days before that enemy could attack. Similarly the Cavalry Division of the XII (Saxon) Corps advanced northwestward, secured the army against Verdun, and ascertained that only a very small portion of the French army had as yet debouched to the west with the Emperor and that the entire hostile army was still at Metz. The Saxon cavalry scouted as far as Etain and Verdun. Thus the activity of the above named cavalry enabled Army Headquarters to dispose with certainty and in security of all its fighting forces with a view to concentrating them for decisive action against the French main army and cut off that army's retreat.

On the 18th of August took place the gigantic struggle between the two armies. On this day the cavalry divisions did not attract much attention to themselves by efficient reconnaissance of the enemy. Before the opening of the

battle the armies stood so close to each other on our right wing as to preclude the sending of large cavalry masses to the front for reconnaissance. Therefore the cavalry divisions still with the army were held in rear in reserve. On the left flank the Saxon cavalry division reconnoitered toward Verdun and Etain and thus covered the rear. But, though less conspicuous, the cavalry divisions nevertheless participated in the battle actively and as in duty bound. I still clearly remember that the Hussar squadron (Count Gröben) which had been sent ahead sent a report back to the Guard Corps, which had reached Doncourt and begun its deployment there, that a hostile advance guard of all arms of about the strength of one brigade was marching from St. Privat to Ste. Marie. This report corrected the original erroneous view that the hostile army extended with its right wing only as far as Amanvillers, and enabled headquarters of the Guard Corps to send its infantry on the shortest road through Habonville (leaving that on the left) to St. Ail, and from there to attack Ste. Marie.

Under the protection of the advanced Hussars and entirely confident of receiving timely reports from them as to any possible changes on the side of the enemy, the Guard Corps marched against the enemy in mass formation, which otherwise would have hardly been possible for troops in the immediate proximity of the enemy. It is true that in accordance with the old rule an advance guard of four battalions and one battery was formed, but this advance guard was followed by the main body so closely that the entire body marched in a single great column, having a breadth of three battalions in column, densely closed up, the artillery in column of batteries in between. Thus this imposing mass marched across country, along the ridge, untill it arrived near the effective zone of the enemy's bursting shells, where it was then compelled to take up battle formation.

I just as clearly remember the moment when I had posted, for the preparation of the battle, the artillery of the 1st Guard Division and to its left the corps artillery, its right wing at the Bois de la Cusse, its left at the village of St. Ail, far in front of the infantry. The right flank was secured by troops of the IXth Army Corps which occupied the woods

of la Cusse; in my front Hessian troopers had reconnoitered the terrain up to the position of the enemy on the heights of Amanvillers—St. Privat and now cleared my front, riding through the intervals between the guns; but there appeared to be no protection for my left flank at St. Ail. Hostile groups of skirmishers advanced from Ste. Marie against St. Ail and caused me anxiety as to the left wing of my artillery line. I hastened to that point and saw to my satisfaction the entire Hussar Regiment halted in a depression in the terrain, protecting my left flank. I could now confidently hold my position until the leading elements of the infantry (Guard Fusiliers) had occupied St. Ail and overcome the danger to my left wing by driving off the hostile skirmishers (later by capturing Ste. Marie). Thus then the divisional cavalry reconnoitered at close range in front of our line, while the large cavalry masses, the cavalry divisions, took over the reconnaissance and protection at long range in our rear. In addition the divisional cavalry participated in the battle proper by occasional protection of the wings.

As a general thing, the 18th of August, unlike the 16th of August, shows no cavalry charges in mass. On the right of the battlefield the ravine between Gravelotte and Point du Jour, being in the fire zone of the main hostile position, prevented a timely assumption of correct formation, for it compelled the troops to break off the formation and deploy again under a heavy hostile fire. Therefore the attempt made by the 1st Cavalry Division, reinforced by two Hussar regiments, to advance there, had to come to naught. But on the left wing the question was of an assault on St. Privat and Amanvillers, and in such action the participation of cavalry is precluded. Therefore nothing remained for the cavalry except to await in rear the outcome of the battle.

Critics have missed the pursuit by cavalry at the close of the battle of St. Privat. On our right wing, from Le Point du Jour to Amanvillers, there could be no question at all of cavalry pursuit for the reason that the enemy held himself in his main positions. Our infantry entered the village of Amanvillers only after dark, and after the capture of St. Privat there was nothing there to pursue, for all parts of the hostile infantry which had not fled after the assault into the

woods behind, were annihilated in St. Privat, either killed or captured. Moreover during the night the French army proceeded to the protection of its fortress walls and thus precluded any cavalry pursuit.

As the battle had lasted with bitterness until dark, the main point at daylight on the 19th was to ascertain where the enemy's position was. Even before daybreak we saw several different cavalry squadrons trotting to the front and ascertaining that the enemy had just about completed his evacuation of the position. But whatever was kept back of the Saxon cavalry division at Auboué (the largest part had scouted toward the Meuse as far as Verdun reconnoitering and protecting the rear), namely one brigade, hastened to Maizieres in the Mosel valley and thus, under the very mouths of the cannons of the fortress, completed the blockade of the enemy.

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Extract from 19th Letter on Strategy

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In the course of the 17th August various reports were received at German headquarters, speaking now of a retreat of the enemy to Metz, another time of one to Verdun, or of a divided retreat in both directions. In general the view seemed to prevail that the enemy was, on the 18th, still in front, in a northerly direction. That was the direction in which he had to be attacked. But to push him off his line of retreat and throw part or all of his forces into Metz, the attack was to be so ordered, that the left wing should advance to the assault. This brought about a complete wheel to the right during the battle of the 18th, and to a large extent even before that battle. For eventually the front of the Germans during the action was toward the east. This change of front on the part of the German army was greatly facilitated by the fact that the French army executed the same movement rearward on the afternoon of the 17th and morning of the 18th, thus making room for the Germans. It did exactly that which the German army meant it to do.

This was curious! What the German army strove to do to ruin the French army, the latter did of its own accord and believed to be its salvation.

After a bitter and bloody struggle on the 18th the French army was pushed from its position and compelled to retire under the guns of the fortress.

The tactical course of this mighty battle does not belong to the sphere of strategical considerations. Strategically, only the advance of the Germans from the left wing to cut the enemy from his base deserves to be mentioned. I will, however, deal with one episode of the battle which is strategical in character, and proves that the subordinate leader, especially when he has command of a corps, may under some circumstances obey his orders best, not by following them to the letter, but by weighing the premises on which they are based, and then acting in harmony with the general designs of the commander.

At 10 a.m. Prince Frederick Charles sent an order to the Guard Corps to march to Verneville and take up position there in support of the 9th Corps.

When the general commanding received this order, his first division was forming at Doncourt and his Hussars reported that French infantry was at Ste. Marie and large bodies of troops at St. Privat. From these reports it was inferred that the premises on which the order of Prince Frederick Charles was based were incorrect, supposing, as they did, that the enemy's right did not extend beyond La Folie.

The Prince of Württemberg therefore did not obey the order to the letter, but for the purpose of acting in harmony with the general design of turning the enemy's right, ordered the 1st Division and the Corps Artillery to march across country in mass from Doncourt in the direction of St. Privat and Ste. Marie, and sent the 2d Division, on its subsequent arrival, in the direction of Verneville. I myself witnessed how hard it was for this general, accustomed to unconditional obedience, partly to violate a strict order in the midst of battle. He reported his action at once. Later on Prince Frederick Charles, having received further information of the situation, approved of the movement and ordered the greater part of the 2d Division to follow in the same direction.

Just imagine the result if the entire Guard Corps had marched on Verneville. The attacks on Amanvillers would have been turned from St. Privat. There would have been a large gap between the Guards and the 12th Corps, which latter, marching on Auboué, Montois, and Roncourt, would have been isolated and exposed to destruction.

Extract From 2d Letter on Artillery

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In the decisive battle of Gravelotte—St. Privat the artillery came upon the scene at every point in still larger masses. This gigantic contest was begun by the fire of the artillery of the 9th Corps. That corps commenced by bringing into action the artillery of the 18th Division and the corps artillery. By noon 54 guns were present at this point in advance of their infantry, and allowed themselves to be carried by their zeal so far to the front under a most effective fire of the enemy's artillery and infantry, that one battery was destroyed by the hostile missiles, while the others, after having fired for two hours, were no longer in a condition to continue the struggle. About an hour after these 54 guns, the five Hessian batteries of the other division came into line on the left of the Bois de la Cusse, and on their arrival this line of artillery amounted to 84 guns. This total was increased to 90 by the arrival of the horse artillery battery of the Hessian cavalry brigade, which posted itself to the east of Verneville. Almost at the same time the four batteries of the 1st Division of the Guard and the Guard corps artillery took up their position on the left of the Hessian batteries and prolonged the line to St. Ail. From after 1 p.m. there were therefore at this point 138 guns which had opened fire before the infantry masses had been engaged. During this time the 7th Corps supported the 9th in its struggle by bringing up its artillery, which after 1 p.m. opened fire with seven batteries. At the same time eleven batteries of the 8th Corps posted themselves on their left and commenced firing, so that the battle was begun by the fire of 108 guns which stood before the front of the 1st Army at Gravelotte.

A very instructive episode, and one very interesting as regards the part played by the artillery, was the capture by

assault, during the cannonade which then followed, of Ste. Marie aux Chênes; this took place at 3 p.m. Thirteen Saxon batteries and ten guns of the Guard corps artillery, a total of 88 guns, were drawn up in a half circle around this village and opened fire on it and our brave infantry, attacking with the greatest dash, passed without a check through the whole village and seized at once the opposite edge. The artillery of the 12th Corps came up also to prolong the mass of artillery in the direction of St. Privat, while the artillery of the 2d Guard Division did the same, by pushing three batteries into the line of battle at St. Ail and a fourth at the center in front of Amanvillers. If we study the plan in the official account, which gives the state of the battle at 5 p.m., we find the German artillery acting in three great groups: the mass on the right wing at Gravelotte, directed against the position of Point du Jour, was composed of 27 batteries; that of the center, in action against Amanvillers, had 13, and that of the left wing, firing on St. Privat, 30 batteries. But five of these batteries had been already brought to the front at Gravelotte and were engaged in the middle of the infantry fight. Only such batteries had been left in reserve as could find no room in the Gravelotte position. In the center, on the other hand, the line of artillery had been reinforced by borrowing guns from the 3d Corps, which formed a reserve. Seventy batteries, or 420 guns, had thus commenced firing before the masses of infantry were sent forward to the decisive attack. The available masses of artillery might have been employed as powerfully and successfully against the village of St. Privat as they had already been against Ste. Marie aux Chênes, if they had been informed that the attack was intended. When suddenly the masses of infantry, as they advanced to the assault, masked the fire of their own batteries, and attacked the as yet uninjured village, but were unable to continue their advance, the batteries hastened forward into the infantry fire, and so overwhelmed the place with shells that its capture became possible.

Wherever the infantry passed to the decisive assault, the artillery, as at Gravelotte, advanced absolutely into the line of skirmishers and supported the sister arm, fighting

with it shoulder to shoulder; it did this at the farm of Champenois and on the ground which lies immediately in front of Amanvillers, and again on the right of St. Privat on the hill which had just been captured. At this point it repulsed the numerous counter-attacks of the enemy's reserves, and assisted the effect produced by the fire of the infantry on the village, which stood like a fortress on its hill. When at length this village had been carried, which was towards the evening, all the artillery which was within reach crowned the chain of heights of which we had taken possession. On the left of St. Privat the whole of the batteries of the 12th Corps (96 guns) took up a position. On the right of St. Privat I collected fourteen batteries of the Guard, besides which all those which could reach the heights came up at once. Colonel Stumpff reported himself to me and announced that he had brought up six batteries, and as night fell Colonel von der Becke led up to me also four batteries of the corps artillery of the 10th Corps, which was held in reserve. By these successive arrivals the total of my force was so increased that at last I had 24 batteries under my command. This total implied nearly 140 guns, for some batteries were not at their full strength, since in the previous artillery fight some guns had been put out of action and it had not yet been possible to refit them. On this height, as night fell, there was thus a continuous line of artillery, divided only by the village of St. Privat, which comprised 230 guns; these swept the ground in the direction of the Bois de Jaumont and the Bois des Fêves so completely that the enemy renounced any attempt to recapture the height from us. The deafening noise of this cannonade lasted until it was altogether dark, and the battle was brought to a close.

Extract from 4th Letter on Artillery

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Need I speak again of St. Privat—Gravelotte and of Sedan, those two battles which, during a great part of the time that they lasted, were battles of artillery? It will be sufficient for me to recall that the assault on Ste. Marie aux Chênes was prepared by the fire of 88 guns in such a manner that our infantry was able, with one rush and without a

stop, to push its way to the opposite edge of the village to that at which it had entered. At St. Privat the attack made no progress until the artillery advanced in a mass to the line of skirmishers, and bombarded the place. . . .

At the battle of St. Privat, when the Guard Corps advanced in line of battalion columns from Doncourt towards the village of St. Privat, it was received by the shells of those of the batteries of the enemy which had been pushed forward to meet us, from the crest of the heights which run from St. Privat to Amanvillers. The four batteries of the 1st Division of the Guard opened their fire against them in succession, that is to say, one after the other, with intervals as short as the deployment of the batteries from column would permit. Immediately afterwards they were reinforced by the corps artillery, and as each of these batteries, according to the orders given to them, posted itself 200 paces nearer to the enemy than the battery on its flank which had already begun to fire, our fire becoming more and more intense and accurate (since its efficacy increased in proportion as the batteries approached nearer to those of the enemy) very soon obliged the latter to retire to their principal position on the heights. We continued the artillery fight against this position at the very long range of 2500 to 2800 paces, since the general commanding the Guard Corps did not wish us to go in to a distance at which we might have produced a decisive effect; for he had received orders to wait at first until the turning movement and the flank attack, which were to be carried out by our left wing, should have produced their full result. Thus from a little after 2 p.m. until a little after 5 p.m. we continued the artillery fight in a position of which the left flank (for there were some modifications in detail), stood a few hundred paces in front of St. Ail, while the right flank touched that of the Hessian artillery, which was posted at the Bois de la Cusse. The result of this artillery fight was that the enemy, at the end of only an hour, ceased to fire, and disappeared behind the hill of St. Privat, which bounded the view in our front. On this occasion the fire of our infantry did not annoy the enemy's artillery, nor did the latter break off the action on account of orders from superior authority, dictated by the general

tactical situation. If the enemy's guns were reduced to silence, we have the right to attribute this result to the effect of our fire, and this result was obtained by us, though the enemy was equal to us in number, and superior with respect to the very favorable position which he occupied. After this first hour had passed, I kept up an extremely slow fire. I obeyed the orders which I had received from the general commanding the Guard Corps, to lengthen out the action and economize my ammunition. In the interval the attack on Ste. Marie aux Chênes was prepared; ten guns of my left wing, as I have several times mentioned, took part in this action, by changing front to the left in front of St. Ail, so that, as they opened fire on Ste. Marie, they presented their right flank to the enemy's main position at St. Privat. But his fire was so kept down that he gained no advantage by this circumstance. When one knows one's self superior, one can attempt the incredible.

We could not dare to nurse the illusion that we had annihilated the great line of artillery of the enemy, of which I estimated the strength at 60 guns, by our fire, which was delivered up a slope at a range from 2000 to 3000 paces. But his complete silence and the retrograde movements which he could be seen making from Roncourt to St. Privat proved that he felt the superiority of our fire. When, however, between 5 and 6 p.m., the infantry of the Guard came out from under cover, and moved against St. Privat, the enemy's infantry and artillery recovered their activity all along the height, which proves that they had only sheltered themselves from our superior fire in order to reopen the fight at the decisive moment. Our infantry, rushing boldly to the attack, very soon masked our batteries, which had again opened a violent fire on the enemy who were now visible, and I ordered the corps artillery (under Scherbening) and that of the 1st Division (under Rychelberg) to accompany the infantry. The right wing of this line of artillery (4 batteries of the 1st Division and 2 batteries of the corps artillery of the Guard) galloped straight forward and reached at the same time as the skirmishers the nearest edge of the heights between St. Privat and Amanvillers at the very moment when the enemy's skirmishers were

giving way before our own. The left wing of the line (3 batteries of the corps artillery, and the batteries of the 2d Division of the Guard, to which, later, two other horse artillery batteries joined themselves) reinforced the firing line of the infantry, which was now firing from the open ground against the walls of the village. Farther to the left the batteries did the same, but I shall make no further mention of them, as they were not under my command. I did not myself see the effect produced by the batteries on my left wing, as I was with the right, and had ordered Colonel Scherbening to lead the other. But some French officers, who were taken prisoners, told us afterwards that this effect was so murderous that, if the infantry attack had taken place half an hour later, we should have found no defenders in the village.

I was then with the right wing and I advanced with the 2d heavy battery, commanded by Prittwitz. It was the first which was ready to start after having limbered up; this operation, by the way, takes much longer in a real engagement than at peace maneuvers: there are shells to pack away, horses which have been shot to unharness, or some little repair to be done to the gun. On this occasion the captain commanding the battery had made up his mind to advance before he received my order, and was thus ready sooner than the others. The battery galloped up the slope of the hill and joined the skirmishers as they moved to the assault; only three guns at first reached the top, the three others having lost horses as they advanced. At the spot where the battery came up, the crest of the hill is so wide that it almost amounts to a plateau. The enemy's skirmishers were flying before ours. But at a distance of from 300 to 500 paces in front of us masses of the enemy, in dense columns, were advancing to dispute the crest of the height with our skirmishers. You can scarcely imagine the effect which the first shot of Prittwitz produced on these masses. In an instant they became motionless as if they had received a violent electric shock. But when shell after shell began to burst in the midst of them, when our line of artillery was reinforced by my other batteries as they arrived in turn at a gallop, and by the three guns of the first bat-

tery, which succeeded in rejoining us, the columns at once took to flight. Then my 30 guns set to work to find the range by firing trial shots at different points, while on our left the fight was raging around St. Privat. The possession of our height was of the greatest importance. From it to our right we could enfilade Amanvillers, for we could see its steeple above a slight undulation of the ground. To our front we were sending shell as far as the quarries of Amanvillers, near the Bois de Fèves, and it was possible for us to reach, at a point near the Inn of Marengo, the end of the main road from Metz to St. Privat, by which the reinforcements which the enemy might send from the former to the latter place must pass. But at the moment there were very few of our infantry on this height. The principal masses were engaged in the fight and the attacks directed against the village. Only the six companies which the general commanding the Guard Corps had sent me during the cannonade to serve as our escort, were available for the attack on the height to the right of the village. But these companies had been cruelly decimated; the battalion commander who led them lay on the ground severely wounded. The captain who succeeded him, though his head was bleeding from a wound, managed to rally 20 or 30 men round the colors. Other small detachments were collected at different points, and were divided between the batteries, so that they might be ready to open a rapid fire at point blank range should the enemy push towards us. When all these arrangements had been made, I placed myself behind the captain of the 4th heavy battery (Seeger), because this officer was the quickest at finding the range by his trial shots. As he gave me the ranges, I sent them to the other batteries by my orderly officers.

We had not long to wait for the first movement which the enemy's infantry was to make in our direction. It advanced in closed column from Amanvillers, and attacked us energetically. When the head of the column became visible over the hill, our trial shots reached it at a range of 1900 paces, and my 30 guns opened a rapid fire. The enemy's infantry was enveloped in the thick smoke which the shells made as they burst. But after a very short time we saw the

red trousers of the masses which were approaching us appear through the cloud. I stopped the fire. A trial shot was fired at 1700 paces range; this was to show us the point up to which we should let them advance before reopening the rapid fire; we did the same for the ranges of 1500, 1300, 1100 and 900 paces. In spite of the horrible devastation which the shells caused in their ranks, these brave troops continued to advance. But at 900 paces the effect of our fire was too deadly for them; they turned short round and fled; we hurled shells after them as long as we could see them. Here was an infantry attack which was repulsed purely and simply by the fire of artillery. A few years later I had the opportunity of talking with an aide-de-camp of General de Ladmirault, the very man who had carried the order to make this counter-attack, and who had been present during its execution. Two regiments of infantry had been dispatched on this duty. The French officer said to me, "It was impossible to succeed. You have no idea what it is to have to advance under the fire of your artillery."

These infantry attacks were repeated. They continued to come from the same direction. Altogether three were made, but the two last were not carried out with the same energy as the first. They were stopped at about 1500 paces in front of our line. A mass of cavalry also appeared, before the infantry attacks, with the object of trying to disengage the defenders of St. Privat from their position. The head of the mass showed itself near the farm of Marengo on the high road from Metz to St. Privat; it halted while the column deployed. As soon as we had found the range with the help of a few trial shots, we opened a rapid fire, and our shells, falling among the crowded ranks of the cavalry, broke up the mass, and it disappeared in the same direction from which it had come. At length our infantry made their way into St. Privat, and the remainder of the batteries of the artillery of the Guard hastened up also, and posted themselves on the height to the right of the village. The enemy, on his part, deployed a grand line of artillery in front of us, in the low ground along the edge of the forest near the quarries of Amanvillers. We found no difficulty in silencing this artillery (it was that of the Imperial Guard),

for we knew our range; we were superior in number (the batteries of the 10th Corps and of the Hessian Division had reinforced our line), and we had the better position. When night came the enemy's artillery had disappeared.

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War Diary of the 1st Squadron, Royal Saxon Guard Cavalry Regiment¹

BY

W. VON KLENCK

Captain and Squadron Commander

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15 AUGUST. March to Cheminot; quarters.

16 AUGUST. Even before it was quite daylight the calls for assembly were sounded and toward 5 a.m. the march was started with the division. The Mosel was crossed at Pont à Mousson and the march objective, Vigneulles, was reached toward 3 p.m., after having passed the villages of Regniéville, Euvezin, Pannes and Nonsard. It was a very hot day and the march was frequently stopped through crossings with other columns.

Two squadrons of our regiment, the 1st and 2d, under command of Major von Funcke, camped in Vigneulles;

¹ Foreword

This Diary was arranged in the Spring of 1871 with the assistance of Lieutenant v. Broizem (now Colonel and Chief of Staff of the Royal Saxon Army Corps) from notes made by me during the war every evening when possible. I was under the impression that each squadron would have to submit a diary to regimental headquarters after the campaign and therefore it was kept brief and to the point and recounts events which concern only the squadron.

My diary slumbered for four and twenty years, only a short while ago I again ran across it. When I read the names of all those with whom I had lived through that great event, the desire took hold of me to make a present of a copy of this diary to each one of my old companions-in-arms as a remembrance of those days never to be forgotten, and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the day of the declaration of war appeared to me the most auspicious day for doing this.

This diary is printed without any changes, and exactly as the notes were written down in those days. May it bring a greeting to my old squadron from its captain, who with joy and pride thinks of the days when he had the honor and fortune to ride at its head!

W. VON KLENCK,
Royal Saxon Major, retired.

Dresden, 15 July, 1895.

headquarters and the other two squadrons in Heudicourt. The regimental commander ordered the 1st Squadron: "to place out outposts and seek connection with the 5th Cavalry Division" and allowed Captain v. Klenck to conduct himself the patrol designated for seeking the 5th Cavalry Division.

The outposts consisted of a field picket alongside the road to Heudicourt south of Vigneulles; this picket placed videttes along the roads to St. Mihiel, Hattonchatel and Heudicourt and patrolled these roads as well as the road to St. Benoit.

Since nothing was known of the whereabouts of the 5th Cavalry Division, I—Captain von Klenck—decided first of all to gain the Thiaucourt—Fresnes en Woëvre—Verdun road, going through Doncourt and thereafter to act according to circumstances. Toward 3.30 p.m., accompanied by the acting first sergeant Count Wallwitz and six guardsmen, I left Vigneulles and after passing Hattonville, Avillers, and Woël, met at Doncourt a Prussian supply column which could give no information of the location of the 5th Cavalry Division but which informed me that heavy cannon fire had been heard since morning in a northeasterly direction. As presumably the 5th Cavalry Division was engaged in the fight taking place, I sent acting first sergeant Count Wallwitz back to Major von Funcke with the message that "I would proceed to the battlefield to execute the orders given me" and rode then across country with four guardsmen to Harville, turning east at that point and following the Metz road. A few thousand paces east of Harville I encountered a cavalry patrol led by an officer, the latter informing me on my question "that a battle was being fought in the vicinity of Mars la Tour, which unfortunately stood against us; he had orders to bring up the 19th Infantry Division." I immediately decided to proceed myself to the battlefield and ask the corps commander whether I should bring up the 12th Cavalry Division. Toward 6 p.m. I arrived on the battlefield, but unfortunately found General von Voigts-Rhetz, commander of the Xth Corps, only after an hour's search. To my question "whether the Saxon Cavalry Division should be brought up" I received the answer "support by infantry would be

more acceptable." I then offered to bring the 23d Infantry Division from Regniéville, but asked for written orders. When these were written out an adjutant from Prince Frederick Charles came to General Voigts-Rhetz and brought that general the request "to take the offensive with the left wing, the battle stood well on the right." General von Voigts-Rhetz answered this request negatively with the remark "his troops had suffered too much and he had no fresh ones left."

I now received orders to submit the written orders for approval to Prince Frederick Charles. These orders read about: "It would be desirable to have all disposable troops assemble at Trouville at daylight tomorrow, in case Prince Frederick Charles should not make other dispositions." Before I took leave of the general I asked for information of the eventual route of retreat. He named Thiaucourt. Prince Frederick Charles, whose position was on the right wing of the battlefield, signed the orders and then I rode alone—my four guardsmen had not been able to keep up with me—from the battlefield at about 7.30 p.m., but in the next village took a lost cavalryman along as orderly, to assure the safe transmission of the order.

Before riding off I had requested an orderly from one of the gentlemen of headquarters. The answer was: "Ride away by yourself and bring up the Saxons as quickly as possible."

Toward 10 p.m., having passed Chambley, Xammes and Thiaucourt, I arrived in Regniéville and reported to H. R. H. Prince George who ordered the immediate assembly of the 23d Infantry Division. Prince George charged me with carrying a copy of the above orders to the commander of the 12th Cavalry Division and, after executing this, I rode back to Vigneulles, arriving there at 3.30 a.m., August 17th.

I take the liberty of saying a few words of the work done by my horse on that day. The same horse on which I made the ride just described I had already ridden on the road from Cheminot to Vigneulles (22 miles) and from 3.30 p.m. to the next morning at 3.30 had covered an additional stretch of from 48 to 52 miles. Half an hour after my arrival in Vigneulles the advance began and I again rode the

same horse. It showed no signs whatever of the fatigue of the previous day, but traveled entirely freshly as usual. It was a Hanoverian half-blood mare, Sire Almora, a troop horse supplied me as an Hanoverian officer from the Hanoverian Queen Hussar Regiment.

¹I am very clear in my own mind why I asked the regimental commander for permission to lead personally the patrol to establish connection with the 5th Cavalry Division. We had been mobilized for the past four weeks, fourteen days on the march, and today the regiment came for the first time up to the first line. Now an opportunity offered to get out, to hear something else, to see, to act, instead of riding along with the regiment as a figure head. I am also quite clear why I came to the decision to ride to the battlefield after meeting the supply column. I wanted to see war and as I had to look for the 5th Cavalry Division, which could not be found, it gave me, as later on August 26th, sufficient justification for going so far away from the regiment. To the present day, however, it has remained a mystery to me how I—a very simple captain—conceived the idea of offering to the Prussian corps the support of the Saxon troops. The statement of the lieutenant leading the patrol could not have worked on me so overwhelmingly, and the very dependent and limited position held in time of peace by a squadron commander with his monotonous duties could certainly not have suggested to me such independent action.

Let it suffice that I did it—and it does not appear that I acted so very wrongly—at least no one ever blamed me for it afterwards.

Sitting at a desk today, and being twenty-five years older, I must say that had General von Voigts-Rhetz answered: "Go to the devil. If I require help I shall send for it myself," I should quite rightly have been richer by one military reprimand or reproof.

At that time I did not think of such an answer, though I well recollect that at the question of the eventual line of retreat the face of the general assumed a certain ambiguous expression, but the answer then followed in an even, polite tone.

I came up to the left wing of the line of battle in the vicinity of Mars la Tour just as there appeared to ensue a pause in the fight. I then learned which corps had been engaged, but nobody could give me any information of the location of the general von Voigts-Rhetz. In an amiable manner a mounted engineer captain, who at the time had nothing else to do, offered to accompany me in my search. And so we rode here and there together, one time by mistake towards the French position, but rapidly faced about when we heard the whistle of bullets. The French still fired off and on but on our side the firing had ceased completely. The battlefield with its dead and wounded was a gruesome sight, I had seen nothing like it since the battle at Langensalza. The most distressing sight to me was a groaning horse, trying to walk on three legs, the fourth, half shot away, dangling on the ground.

How glad I was when finally I found the general. One of the officers of the staff had to write down the orders and I am sorry I do not know whether he was the chief of staff von Capriivi who was subsequently Chancellor and one with whom I was in entire accord. The present commandant of the Military Riding Institute, General von Willich, then 1st Lieutenant and Adjutant of the Xth Corps, could not give me any information about it, as he was absent at that moment.

Leaving General von Voigts-Rhetz, I rode with Prince Frederick

¹ The paragraphs on this and the following pages printed in smaller type were added subsequently to the original manuscript.

Charles' adjutant to that Prince. H. R. H., in the well known Red Hussar uniform and surrounded by a large staff, was on the right wing in the vicinity of Flavigny. I reported to him and thereupon he signed the order.

When I now wanted to ride off, I perceived to my fright, that all my guardsmen had disappeared, and a long ride in the night stared me in the face. My request for an orderly was inexplicably refused. I rode off in a bad humor and thought in my dull mind: "Why don't they send one of the many officers of the staff, who have dozens of orderlies at their disposal?"

Three hours later formal orders were issued by Prince Frederick Charles in Gorze, according to which the XIIth and the Guard Corps should start at once for the vicinity of Mars la Tour and Tronville respectively.

It was about 16 miles to headquarters of the 23d (Royal Saxon) Infantry Division in Regniéville en Haye; the night was very dark. As a matter of course I wanted to ride fast, and when I asked the cavalryman of the 13th Hanoverian Uhlans, who accompanied me, if he had a good mount, he replied that he did not know, that he had picked up the horse on the battlefield after his own had been killed. I now informed him that in my inner breast coat pocket was an important order to be delivered to H. R. H. Prince George of Saxony in Regniéville, and also gave him black on white the road to be taken to that place, that is, the names of the villages to be passed and added that, should any mishap overtake me on the way, he was to pay no attention to me but to ride on with those orders. Near Regniéville we were suddenly halted by a "Halt, who's there!" After I had given my name and regiment to the Saxon infantry sentinel who got ready to fire—I heard the click of his hammer—he demanded the parole and countersign. I did not know these but my brave Uhlan could help out. Even then the sentinel would not let us proceed and only after a non-commissioned officer came up, did I receive the necessary permission.

The only time in this war when the thought came to me in an unpleasant manner that I might be shot was this very time. The sentinel standing ready to fire immediately in front of me was much excited and I expected every moment that his piece might be discharged by carelessness or otherwise.

Prince George had just retired to rest when I reported at headquarters, but appeared in a few minutes. He requested detailed information of what I had seen on the battlefield and what I had heard, also of the condition of the roads leading there and the probable blocking of the same by supply and other columns. I was then dismissed in the most courteous manner and after I and my Uhlan had been supplied with something to eat and drink through the kindness of an officer of the staff, and after care had also been taken of our horses, I again took the road into the night, this time in better humor.

Unfortunately I did not keep in mind the name of the Uhlan who also accompanied me to Vigneulles. During a ride of some 28 miles in the night in the enemy's country we get acquainted with most anyone. He was a rarely pleasant and agreeable man and a soldier through and through.

As the start on August 17th had been ordered for 4 a.m., I had but twenty minutes in which to sleep. My horse was watered and fed (on bread) and then I rode it again that day as well as the next, August 18th, from 7.30 a.m. to August 19th, 7.30 a.m. On the morning of the 19th my Almora mare was just as fresh as if she had just come from her stall in No. 7 Kloster Street, Dresden. She had not been in training of any kind before the opening of the campaign; on the contrary, she had not worked at all as I had returned but a few days before mobili-

zation from a four weeks' leave. On October 12th the mare received a shot in the right hip joint during the battle of Breteuil and, as the bullet could not be extracted, had to be shot.

I wept bitter tears when I saw my fine Hanoverian mount fall down under the mortal shot!

I return now to the consequences of my ride to the battlefield:

The General Staff Account, Part I, Vol. I, pp. 653, 654 and 655 states as follows concerning the situation after the battle of Mars la Tour:

"Prince Frederick Charles had taken up his headquarters at Gorze on the evening of August 16th. After the issue of the battle the headquarters of the II^d Army had to be prepared for a fresh attempt on the part of the French forces, which were evidently superior, to reopen the way westward which was now barred to them. Owing to the great exhaustion of the troops which had taken part in the struggle, arrangements had to be made for bringing forward fresh troops as early as possible to the battlefield, so as to meet the expected attack in sufficient strength. After the Prince had made the needful arrangements for replenishing the ammunition, he issued the necessary orders to the different troops between 10 and 11 o'clock that night.

"The II^d and IVth Army Corps, which were at Buchy and les Saizerais, two long days' march from the battlefield, could not be calculated upon for the next day; they were to abide by their previous orders (in accordance with which the former was to move up to Pont à Mousson, the latter to continue its advance in the direction of the Meuse as far as the neighborhood of Boucq).

"The XIIth and the Guard Corps were also 18 to 20 miles away from the battlefield; nevertheless it was possible to bring them up in the course of August 17th. Special notifications were therefore sent to them and to the IXth Corps, acquainting them with the events of the day, and at the same time giving the following orders for the 17th:

"The IXth Army Corps, headquarters of which was at Gorze, was directed to assemble at daybreak on the heights north of the village. The XIIth Army Corps was to move off that same night, gain the neighborhood of Mars la Tour by way of Thiaucourt, and take up a position in rear of the Xth Corps. Lastly, the Guard Corps was ordered to march without delay to Mars la Tour by way of Beney and Chambley in order to take post on the left of the Saxons, while its cavalry was to continue its advance towards the Meuse.

"Since the most distant troops of the IXth Corps had to march not quite nine miles to the prescribed place of assembly, it was possible to count upon its arrival in rear of the right wing of the line of battle during the early morning.

"Less certain appeared the timely support of the left wing by the XIIth and the Guard Corps. The zeal of the commanders, however, gave an impetus to the execution of these movements.

"In consequence of the instructions previously received from Royal Headquarters—H. R. H. the Crown Prince of Saxony had received verbal orders from His Majesty King William at 9.30 o'clock the evening of August 16th to start the XIIth Corps at 3 a.m. August 17th by Thiaucourt toward Mars la Tour and to send the cavalry against the road to Verdun—the commander of the XIIth Army Corps had given orders to his cavalry to assemble near Vigneulles at 4 a.m., on the 17th, and then to move forward at once in order of battle toward Harville. In the event of its not meeting with the enemy so near as that place, the division was to move on to the Metz—Etain road, with a view to acquiring as precise intelligence as it could with regard to the condition of the enemy, and at the same time to endeavor to intercept all troops and convoys—arrangements which evidently aimed at striking as

rapidly and deeply as possible at the French communications with the west.

"The measures of the commander-in-chief had likewise been anticipated by the 23d Division in a suitable manner. Captain von Klenck, of the Saxon service, who was deputed to keep up communication with the 5th Cavalry Division, and in doing so had been a spectator of the engagement of the Xth Army Corps, arrived at division headquarters at Regniéville en Haye after 10 p.m. He was the bearer of a request from General von Voigts-Rhetz, with the sanction of Prince Frederick Charles, for the 23d Division to advance to Tronville, the arrival there of fresh forces with the least possible delay being intimated as very desirable. Prince George of Saxony, commanding the division, ordered his troops to stand to arms at once and to move off by way of Thiaucourt. Their own headquarters and those of the Guard Corps were apprised of the orders which had been issued.

"When this intelligence reached the latter shortly before midnight, the commanding general, Prince August of Württemberg, determined for the present to suspend the advance to the Meuse orders for the 17th. Pending orders from the commander-in-chief, he at once concentrated in a northerly direction his two infantry divisions with the corps artillery at Flirey and Richécourt, the cuirassier brigade at Heudicourt. By these anticipatory arrangements the commander of the Guard Corps was enabled to comply promptly with the instructions from Gorze which reached him in the course of the night.

"At 5 a.m. the corps commenced its march through Beney in accordance with orders. The brigade of lancers of the Guard alone remained on the Meuse with a view to watching toward the west from St. Mihiel.

"The report dispatched by Prince Frederick Charles from Gorze at 11 p.m. reached Royal Headquarters at Pont à Mousson after midnight, whither at the same time Lieut. Colonel von Bronsart had also returned from the battlefield and made his verbal report. It was now known that two Prussian army corps had sustained a severe and sanguinary struggle against superior hostile forces, and that it was above all things necessary to support the former in good time in the positions which they now held."

With this I conclude the citation from the General Staff Account.

The paragraph "Less certain appeared the timely support of the left wing by the XIIth and the Guard Corps. The zeal of the commanders, however, gave an impetus to the execution of these movements" may well be placed to the credit of the orders from Prince Frederick Charles, suggested by me in the first place and then carried to their destination, and it is due to that fact that these commanders took their measures earlier than they would otherwise have done.

The instructions, approved by Prince Frederick Charles, read verbatim:

"It is desirable that everything, which can in any way be spared, appear at Tronville at daybreak tomorrow morning, unless Prince Frederick Charles should order other dispositions.

"VON VOIGTS-RHETZ,

"PRINCE FREDERICK CHARLES."

This order was the first information the XIIth Army Corps, and through it the Guard Corps, had of the situation on the battlefield of Mars la Tour.

Prince George of Saxony was not for a moment in doubt as to the situation. "The Prussian forces have encountered superior hostile forces and desire immediate support" was the first remark of this Prince. The second: "We are to go to Tronville, it is so written

here," when the measures to be taken were discussed with the chief of staff.

The reason why the Royal Saxon Army Corps did not start the march at once, can be seen in *König Albert, 50 Jahre Soldat*, where it reads:

"Army headquarters had ordered that all troops were to appear at Mars la Tour at sunrise, and starting the 23d Infantry Division at once would have made it possible for at least a part of the corps to appear, if not at sunrise at least during the forenoon. Royal Headquarters, however, in spite of its having received information of the events in the meantime, insisted on adherence to its orders to start not earlier than 3 a.m. and sent orders to Crown Prince Albert to await with the 23d Division, on the other side of Thiaucourt and in front of Xammes, the arrival of the corps commander. Copies of the orders received and measures taken were sent to IId Army headquarters."

On receipt of the request from Voigts-Rhetz the Guard Corps had at once been alarmed, but the march northward was started only after the orders sent by Prince Frederick Charles from Gorze between 10 and 11 p.m., the so-called actual orders, had been received, that is at 5 a.m.

But the orders carried by me had at least had the positive usefulness that in consequence of the immediate alarming of the troops they were ready to take up the march at once on the receipt of the proper orders.

Personally I shall say nothing as to the value of my action, but will quote in that respect from Prince zu Hohenlohe's *Strategische Briefe*, Part I, p. 321:

"If Bazaine had attacked early on the 17th, then the coming up of the Guard Corps, as well as that of the XIIth Corps, would have decided the fate of the day."

This "if" did not materialize. Hence the "coming up" of the two corps, which my ride caused, had not the practical value which it might have had.

For all that the ride to the battlefield of Mars la Tour will always remain for me the brightest and most interesting event in my military life.

For me personally this ride was without any consequences, only one lesson have I learned thereby. When the next afternoon the regiment was marching in squadron column and the command was given to assume bivouac formation, the regimental commander had to repeat his command to cause me to give the proper command to my squadron. The reason was simple. My squadron was in the lead and while waiting for the other to come up, I had fallen asleep. The regimental commander had not noticed it, and even I should not have known it had not one of my officers told me about it later. As I had been in the saddle for the past thirty-six hours and had slept only half an hour during that time, it was quite comprehensible that my eyes closed.

17 AUGUST. The cavalry division was in readiness for the start at 4 a.m. at Vigneulles. The 1st Squadron (Guard Cavalry Regiment) received orders to cover the right flank and seek connection with the 12th Corps.

The division marched through Hattonville, Avillers, Doncourt and Harville on Parfondrupt.

The 1st Squadron marched through St. Benoit, Woël, and

Jonville to Latour en Woëvre and on asking for them received orders to rejoin the division at Parfondrupt. A patrol was sent from Benoit through Dampvitoux, Dommartin, Lachaussée and Sponville without however having accomplished its mission—establishing connection with the 12th Corps.

The commander of the squadron thought it appropriate to gain information for the division of the situation on the battlefield of the previous day, and proceeded there with a patrol.

The German corps stood then in general south of the road between Mars la Tour and Vionville; it was said that the French army had fallen back on Metz.

In the evening the division occupied a bivouac between Parfondrupt and St. Jean les Buzy.

18 AUGUST. Battle of St. Privat. The bivouac was astir soon after midnight. Our outposts on the road to Etain and Verdun had been bothered by French patrols, a few shots had been fired, and as we had to be in readiness for any possible event, considering our exposed position, the men were quietly called and horses saddled. Thus everything remained until after 3 a.m., the horses held by the reins. At 3.30 a.m. we unsaddled. Everyone made use of the few hours until the start to get a little sleep to gain strength for the coming fatigue.

Toward 7.30 a.m. the division started and marched from Parfondrupt through Olley into a rendezvous position south of Puxe (the 4th platoon, 1st Squadron, under Lieutenant Broizem as right flank guard along the right bank of the Orne). Soon we saw small white clouds of bursting shrapnel above the hills in the east, the sound of cannon increased; a battle was in progress.

About 10.30 a.m., the Guard Cavalry Regiment and the 3d Cavalry Regiment with the horse battery under Major General Senfft left Pilsach, the two Uhlan regiments remaining behind to watch the Verdun—Etain—Metz road.

Toward 2 p.m., having marched through Conflans north of Batilly, the cavalry brigade arrived on the battlefield and formed for battle in platoon columns by squadrons.

The battle seemed here to progress favorably. Everything seemed to be slowly advancing to attack and there were still large masses of infantry and artillery intact in reserve.

Our brigade proceeded slowly from hill to hill. Toward 4 p.m. the Briey—Metz road between Auboué and Ste. Marie aux Chênes was reached.

There the squadron received the glorious task, in conjunction with one squadron of the 3d Cavalry Regiment (Captain von Polenz): "to destroy at all costs the railroad and telegraph between Metz and Thionville."

For this task the squadron was specially assigned to the road in the Orne valley, Auboué—Grand Moyeuivre—Riche-mont.

Orders for this had come direct from Royal Headquarters and it had been left to the discretion of Crown Prince Albert whether he should employ the entire 12th Cavalry Division for that purpose.

All the pioneers of the regiment were attached to the 1st Squadron and followed immediately behind the advance guard (4th Platoon under Lieutenant von Broizem). Beyond Auboué the squadron met the squadron of the 3d Cavalry Regiment, which had started a little sooner. A Saxon infantry regiment stood in the valley, the officers of which were sure that the valley of the Orne was held in force by strong French detachments.

The road between Auboué and Grand Moyeuivre is a continuous defile. On the south the steep wooded hillside, on the north the bank of the Orne, falling precipitately down to that marshy river. Shortly after leaving Auboué the point reported the road blocked by felled trees. As we did not expect that these obstacles would continue, it was decided not to leave the road but to work our way over the obstacles. Soon we had to dismount and proceed in single file. For long stretches trees had been felled straight across the road, between them ditches dug. One time the horses had to jump, another time descend ditches, often having to make detours to avoid marshy meadows and wet ditches. Very soon the column was extended over an hour in length. It seemed as though the obstacles would never come to an

end. Finally, at Grand Moyeuivre, we again gained an open road—fortunately not occupied by the enemy—and the squadron was slowly reformed. But about an hour and a half had been lost and, as Moyeuivre is a telegraph station, it was feared that the expedition had been discovered and that its progress would be interfered with.

About 6.30 p.m. the squadron was again formed and a quick trot taken up. There were still some single trees across the road, but they could easily be avoided. Toward 7.30 p.m., having marched through Clouange, Vitry and Boussange without further trouble, the railroad was reached at Richemont.

This place, the exits of which were barricaded, was first completely surrounded, the mayor then arrested, and videttes sent out to all sides. The mayor stated that no French troops had been in the village for the past three days and that the obstructions we had encountered had been placed by engineer troops.

Work was hastily commenced. The pioneers, under direction of Acting First Sergeant Döring and Sergeant Oehme (3d Squadron), first shoveled off the gravel on the railroad bed, then the bolts of the fishplates and the spikes were knocked off, which Private Böhme very satisfactorily performed with a smith's sledge. Then the rails were pried off, with telegraph poles which in the meantime had been cut down, and thrown into the water, as well as the ties. The result of the work, which soon had to be carried on by lanterns, was a complete destruction of the double track sixteen paces in length and interruption of the telegraph line at several places.

After two hours of work assembly was sounded and the return march began at 10 p.m., after the laborers had had some bread and wine.

The return march led through Boussange, Fameck, Morlange and Ranguieux to Neufchef without stop except to water the horses at a few points. This road was chosen since it appeared inadvisable, and in fact almost impossible, to try and pass the obstacles on the other road in the dark.

In Neufchef the squadron rejoined the squadron of the 3d Cavalry Regiment. On the march from there it was

found that the forest roads there also were obstructed by felled trees. Forty inhabitants with axes were therefore requisitioned and made to march at the head of the column and clear the road to some extent at least.

Thus we proceeded. Of course we had to dismount frequently and lead the horses up the steep, slippery hill roads. The largest trees had been felled across the road and that for miles; it evidently had been the intention to make the roads absolutely impassable. The night was bright, but damp and cold; our knees commenced to tire out and our eyes to close.

At dawn of day we again reached the open, and, marching through Avril and Briey, we returned on August 19th at 7.30 a.m. to the bivouac of the brigade at Auboué.

Reflections on Army Matters and the Conduct of War¹

BY

A. VON BOGUSLAWSKI
Lieutenant General, Reserve List

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4. Movements Leading up to the Battle of Gravelotte—St. Privat

OF the three great battles fought under the personal leadership of King William, Gravelotte is the only one in which the army designated to carry out the strategic object—attack of the army under Marshal Bazaine—was tactically assembled before the battle.² The 1st Army stood with the 7th Corps from the woods of Vaux and Ognons to Ars; the 8th Corps at Gorze; the 1st Cavalry Division at Corny.

Of the II^d Army the 9th Corps stood at the Bois de Vionville; the 3d Corps with the 5th Division at Buxières, with the 6th at Flavigny and Vionville; the 6th Cavalry Division behind the 6th Division; the 10th Corps and the 5th Cavalry Division at Tronville. Of the 12th Corps the 23d Division bivouacked at Mars la Tour, the 24th at Puxieux. The Guard Corps was at Hannonville. Headquarters of the II^d Army were in Buxières.

The day following the battle of Vionville, August 17th, there was great uncertainty as to whether the French army

¹Published Berlin, April, 1897. Extracts from Part III—Tactics, Chapter XII, p. 209.

²Except the 4th Corps which was not brought up, and the 2d Corps, which, however, came into battle on the evening of the 18th.

in whole or in part was marching off on the Metz—Etain road or had taken up a position west of Metz.

It is now known that the reconnaissance by the cavalry on that day did not achieve what could justly have been expected of it, that is, ascertaining what direction the French army had taken in the forenoon of the 17th from Vionville. It is true that the Saxon cavalry division had reached the Metz—Etain road at St. Jean les Buzy at 9 o'clock and had found no hostile detachments there. Report of this first reached the Saxon Corps headquarters at 3 p.m., that is, after Royal Headquarters had issued the orders at 2 p.m. for August 18th.

But even with that report there was nothing definitely ascertained as regards the position of the French army. The entire cavalry of the Ist and IId Armies did not participate in the reconnaissance. This unusual lack of activity of the German cavalry was undoubtedly due to the intention of avoiding a resumption of the battle in view of the losses suffered the day before (16,000 dead and wounded), especially since the concentration of the German armies was affected only during the forenoon. Nevertheless, we cannot on that account alone, approve the failure to make use of the cavalry on August 17th. In case no orders were given for it by sub-army headquarters, the chief command could have arranged for it. Moreover the 1st Cavalry Division was entirely fresh.

This entire situation is a good example of the fact that in actual war conditions will arise in which reconnaissance will fail and makes it possible for us to estimate correctly the easy reconnaissance performed at our maneuvers so as not thereby to become spoiled.

It is of course true that no report could bring certainty as to whether or not the French army would very early on the 18th start on its retreat through Etain or Briey, as is correctly pointed out in the General Staff Account, page 672, in a footnote. Knowing, however, that a large part of the French troops had gone into camp between Rozerieulles and Montigny la Grange, we might have concluded with great probability of truth that the entire army remained stationary if similar reports had been received from the vicinity of St. Privat and Roncourt.

It has been stated that the issuing of orders at 2 p.m. and the return of Royal Headquarters to Pont à Mousson was incorrect and the criticism has been made that the latter should have remained longer at Flavigny, in order to take advantage of any further reports which might have been received as a basis for further orders. Against this nothing can be said; we can only emphasize the fact that the orders of the 17th, even had the position of the French been ascertained on the evening of that day, could hardly have read differently than they actually did. For in any event the retreat of the French, or at least that of the larger part of them, had to be reckoned with in either case.¹

* * *

Prince Frederick Charles had informed the corps commanders at Mars la Tour and Vionville, at 5 and 5.30 p.m. respectively, of the march directions which the corps were to take. In the first line the 12th Corps was to start at 5 a.m. on the left wing toward Jarny, the Guard Corps toward Doncourt, the 9th Corps to start at 6 a.m. close to the left of St. Marcel toward the north. The 3d Corps was to follow the 9th and 10th Corps behind the 12th and Guard Corps. Prince Frederick Charles assumed that the army under Bazaine would start at that very time toward Conflans, thus assuming that the enemy would do the most reasonable thing. Thus nothing certain was known even then as to the situation. The corps artillery of the 3d Army Corps was placed at the disposition of army headquarters as an army artillery reserve.

Whether all this will result in a turn to the right or to the left by the II^d Army, cannot yet be decided. For the present the question is merely one of an advance of less than four miles. This march will be made not in long thin march columns but by divisions massed within themselves, the corps artillery between the two divisions of each army corps.

For our purpose we will next consider the manner of this advance.

The 12th Corps started from Mars la Tour only at 7 a.m. Prior to this there was a march crossing. After its arrival on the battlefield the 12th Corps was on the right of the

¹The orders, omitted here, will be found on page 46, *ante*.

Guard Corps. But the Saxons were to advance on the left wing and the 24th Division, remaining in march column, had to first cross Mars la Tour, thereby causing a delay in the march of the Guard Corps, which had started at 5.30 a.m. from its bivouacks at Hannonville and shortly thereafter reached Mars la Tour. The reason for this measure is sought in the fact that the Guard Corps was desired to be in the center of the line of battle, according to its peculiar destination. Of a "peculiar destination" of the Guard Corps, about in the sense of a battle reserve like under Napoleon I., nothing had been noticed in 1866 and here there could be no question of its utilization as a reserve, since this corps was placed in the first line. Other reasons must have caused the adoption of this measure. The 10th Corps was able to follow the Guard Corps from Tronville only at 10 a.m.

It was very strange that the cavalry divisions—except the Saxon cavalry division—were left behind the front. This probably was done in the certain expectation of very soon encountering the enemy and being obliged to open the battle with artillery and infantry. The further course of the situation justified the measure—but how would it have been had the enemy actually retreated along the road to Briey and efficiently used his cavalry to cover the retreat?

The orders directing the formation of the troops were in entire consonance with the situation and are in accordance with the maxims which have developed concerning deployment formations.

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5. The Higher Battle Leadership

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By 10.30 a.m., August 18th, the situation had so far cleared that the German Headquarters assumed that the enemy intended to hold himself between Point du Jour and Montigny la Grange. Orders were therefore issued that the 12th and the Guard Corps should take the direction of Batilly to reach the enemy at Ste. Marie aux Chênes in case he should have marched off toward Briey, and to attack him

from Amanvillers should he remain stationary on the heights.

"The attack should be made simultaneously: by the Ist Army from the Bois de Vaux and Gravelotte, by the 9th Corps against the Bois de Genivaux and Vernéville, by the left wing of the IId Army from the north."

The Ist Army was to be held back until the IId Army should be ready to coöperate.

In the meantime Prince Frederick Charles had gained the conviction that the main forces of the enemy were not marching off toward Briey—the only route of retreat still open to the French—and had sent the 9th Corps as early as 10 a.m. toward Vernéville and La Folie in order—should the right wing of the enemy be there,—to open the battle by a deployment of strong artillery. The Guard Corps was to follow the 9th Corps on Doncourt and Vernéville, the Saxon Corps to remain for the present at Jarny. Reports received later increased the Prince's conviction of the correctness of his views. But it was thought that the French right wing did not extend to beyond Amanvillers until a new report stated that a French camp was in sight at St. Privat.

In consequence of this report Headquarters IId Army ordered the 9th Corps (11.30 a.m.), in case the enemy's right wing did reach beyond La Folie, to delay its attack until the Guard Corps could attack from Amanvillers. This latter corps was to advance in all haste to Vernéville, to reach out as far beyond Habonville as possible, and then, from Amanvillers, to attack the right hostile wing. These were the orders of 11.30 a.m. The 12th Corps was to advance on Ste. Marie aux Chênes; the 10th Corps received instructions to march to St. Ail (orders of 12 noon); the 3d, with which corps Prince Frederick Charles found himself, was to follow the 9th Corps to Vernéville; the 12th Corps to march on Ste. Marie aux Chênes (12 o'clock) in order to envelop St. Privat from there; the 2d Corps, which was approaching, was directed toward Rezonville.

Before these new orders reached General von Manstein,

commanding the 9th Corps, he had begun the battle by the deployment of a strong artillery very close to the enemy.

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The commanding generals of the 12th and the Guard Corps had partly followed the orders from Prince Frederick Charles, mentioned above, and had also supplemented them in part, and that correctly. When the 1st Guard Division, Pape, arrived at Habonville, its commander perceived that the attack on Amanvillers could not be executed, and decided, even before the arrival of new orders, to march off in the ravine running from Habonville north in the direction of St. Ail—Ste. Marie (about 1 p.m.). He reported this to corps headquarters and received its approval; but now he had to halt in front of Ste. Marie and wait for orders, since that village had in the meantime been occupied by the French.

The artillery of the 1st Guard Division went into position at Habonville and later at St. Ail, where it was joined by the corps artillery.

In the meantime II^d Army headquarters reached the conclusion that St. Privat was strongly occupied by the French. This village was now—contrary to the former intention—to be attacked by the Guard Corps; but the battle was to be carried on for the present only by artillery until the 12th Corps could envelop the position.

About 3 p.m. the Crown Prince of Saxony reported that he had started the 24th Division on Ste. Marie aux Chênes, the 23d on Coinville with directions to envelop the French right wing. This independent decision was of great importance, for thereby the 12th Corps received the march direction enabling it to conform to the intentions of the army commander.

About 3.20 p.m. Ste. Marie aux Chênes was taken, after a short artillery preparation, by parts of the 23d (47th Brigade) and 1st Guard Divisions—Generals von Nehrhoff and Pape having consulted together as to ways and means. A large part of the 47th Brigade, the commander of which was wounded, immediately followed up the retreating French to Roncourt, paying no attention to the express orders to

hold Ste. Marie,¹ but encountered such a heavy resistance in front of that place that the troops were driven back to Ste. Marie.² This further advance was not in consonance with the planned envelopment.

In the meantime the 2d Guard Division had come up. The 3d Guard Infantry Brigade was placed at the disposal of General von Manstein and took position at Habonville. The 4th marched with the divisional artillery to St. Ail. The divisional artillery went into position south of Ste. Marie, so that now the entire Guard artillery under Prince von Hohenlohe was engaged.

In the meantime the 23d Division had been sent by Crown Prince Albert through Auboué on Roncourt to envelop the enemy. The Saxon artillery covered this movement from a position north of Ste. Marie.

The deployment of artillery from the Bois de la Cusse to the woods of Auboué consisted of about 180 guns and silenced the French artillery at St. Privat and Amanvillers. By this time a pause had occurred in the fire—a shot was fired by the artillery only here and there.

As Saxon Corps headquarters believed the vicinity of Roncourt too strongly occupied and as the Crown Prince intended at all hazards to avoid encountering the hostile front, he issued orders at 4 p.m. to Prince George (23d Division) to reach out farther to the north and for that purpose the latter received the 48th Brigade (of the 24th Division).

In consequence of these orders Prince George sent the 48th Brigade to advance in the Orne valley through Montois on Roncourt. The 45th Brigade was to attack that place from the west. At this time the 46th Brigade was between Moineville and Coinville.

The 47th Brigade, however, which had fought at Ste. Marie, was drawn from that place north to the south edge of the woods by Auboué in order, as the General Staff Account states in a footnote, to be in readiness there as a corps reserve. We can hardly consider this movement justified. The brigade had better have been directed against Roncourt as soon as the enveloping column interfered from the north.

¹Report of the 12th Corps.

²Statement of an eye witness.

Montois was unoccupied. The resistance was everywhere very slight, as Marshal Canrobert at this time assembled all his forces in and around St. Privat.

The Saxon artillery had advanced from its position on the Ste. Marie—Hautmécourt road in two rushes to a position about 1700 meters west of Roncourt. When the 45th Brigade advanced from the west and the enveloping column from the north, against Roncourt, they found that village unoccupied. The south end of the village, according to the statement of a reliable man, had been reached before then by a few companies of the 1st Guard Brigade, but probably they reached there about the same time as the Saxons. The Brigade Péchot had before this occupied the forest of Jaumont, against which one regiment of the 48th Brigade and parts of the 47th were now compelled to turn. Later the Brigade Péchot was driven back to behind the quarries of Jaumont.

We may well doubt whether the reaching out beyond Montois was necessary, especially as, according to the report of the 1st Guard Division, Lieutenant von Byern of the Guard Hussar Regiment reported on his return from a patrol ride that the vicinity at Montois and Roncourt was free of the enemy except some few patrols and this officer had sent the same report also to the Saxon corps headquarters. But in any case the maxim was adhered to: in enveloping, envelop completely to be on the safe side.

In the meantime the attack of the Guard Corps had been started. This attack has given rise to many comments and reflections.

Prince August of Württemberg considered the immediate attack necessary and asked for the approval of the army commander, which was granted, according to the General Staff Account, page 860. There is no express mention of such approval in the report rendered by headquarters II^d Army. It is said therein: "The advanced time of day did not permit of awaiting the completion of the envelopment begun through Montois on Roncourt (on the part of the Saxons); rather it appeared necessary to bring about the decision at once. These considerations induced Prince August of Württemberg to attack." But undoubtedly the approval was given verbally and General von Pape's state-

ments are in accord with this view to the effect that conditions could not have been overlooked from Habonville.

The coöperation of the Saxons at this time (5 p.m.) was impossible. According to a statement in the *Militär Wochenblatt* in 1872 by the then chief of staff of the Guard Corps, later minister of war, Bronsart von Schellendorf, the following reasons for attack are given:

1. The intention of bringing help to the 9th Corps.
2. To facilitate the envelopment of the Saxons.
3. Because hostile movements were seen which could be interpreted either as some operation against a neighboring corps or as the beginning of a retreat.
4. Because it was assumed that the French main reserves would be directed toward the right wing, which was a fact as was learned later.

The General Staff Account states, on page 859, that it was then believed that the Saxons would interfere directly and that the advanced hour of the day demanded a decision.

The reasons given in the *Militär Wochenblatt* are in my opinion insufficient and those cited in the General Staff Account may be given in explanation as to why the original plan—which was certainly correct—to await the envelopment of the Saxons was deviated from.

It is certainly very remarkable that a massed artillery fire was not at once directed on St. Privat. This was not done at all as a matter of fact. Our long artillery lines had silenced the hostile artillery, but not a shot had been fired on St. Privat, the main attack objective, when the attack was started. And this attack was also no mass attack on a large scale.

Its course was as follows: First the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade advanced from St. Ail against the projecting spur of the hill south of St. Privat, took it, but after suffering enormous losses was unable to advance further although it maintained its hold there in spite of a counter attack, by the Division Cissey, against its right flank, which was defeated with the help of a few groups of infantry and two batteries which had arrived on the ridge. These batteries here performed a piece of heroism similar to the two batteries which held their position at St. Hubert.

As soon as General von Manstein observed the advance of the 4th Guard Brigade he caused the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade, placed under his orders, to advance from Habonville against Amanvillers. Three Hessian batteries also were to advance to cover the left flank of the Guard brigade.

The Guard brigade left the Regiment Elizabeth temporarily in the Bois de la Cusse and called it up only after the advance of the other battalions had come to a stand in front of Amanvillers, also after suffering enormous losses. There was no talk here of a mass attack. Still a stretch of terrain was gained in front of Amanvillers and held in spite of several counter attacks by the French. In these two attacks the effect of the German artillery against the counter attacks of the French was a very decisive one.

In the meantime the attack of the 1st Guard Infantry Division was started from Ste. Marie, to which place Prince August of Württemberg had ridden. He ordered the attack to be made along the road, guiding on the highest buildings in St. Privat.

General von Pape very pointedly called attention to the fact that the Saxon envelopment column was not yet near and that no artillery fire had as yet been directed on St. Privat. Prince August replied that the 12th Corps was to attack Roncourt about 5 p.m., and that it was now 5.30 p.m. and consequently high time for the 1st Guard Division to start. On the rejoinder by General von Pape that the 12th Corps was still northwest of Ste. Marie, the Prince replied that the 2d Guard Division was already advancing against Amanvillers, with the addition "everything takes so long a time with you."

The remark that the artillery had not yet fired on St. Privat was in consonance with the facts. There was an absence of agreement between the artillery and the troop commanders. The artillery, furthermore, had not received the necessary orientation as to the imminent attack on St. Privat. On the other hand, as already remarked, it had efficiently supported the attack on Amanvillers.

The second motive advanced by General von Pape, concerning the approach of the Saxons, was correct, though he did not estimate correctly the actual location of the Saxons

at that moment. After the last rebuff by the Prince, General von Pape issued at once orders for the advance. He had no choice of attack direction. Some of the higher houses had been designated as attack objective by the chief of staff of the Guard Corps, Colonel von Dannenberg. The 1st Guard Infantry Division, southwest of Ste. Marie, now started forward.

The 2d Guard Regiment followed immediately behind the right wing of the 1st Brigade, but was very soon drawn forward by the general into the first line on the right.

Each regiment of the 1st Guard Brigade was formed in three lines, the first line in column of companies, the other two into half-battalions. The brigade under General von Kessel first made a left turn with the intention of getting near the fortress-like position from the northwest and of utilizing the terrain there which was more favorable for the attack. In this manner the brigade executed a flank march under the hostile fire without any cover and I can only adhere to my statement made in *Entwicklung der Taktik* that this brigade ought to have made that movement west of Ste. Marie and to have moved round the northern corner to execute the attack. After covering about 600 paces the battalions turned successively to the right and then advanced to the attack on St. Privat, while a few companies from the left wing remained in the direction of Roncourt, where they encountered the Saxons. The very weak garrison of Roncourt fled from the village.

Though supported by the 4th Guard Regiment, the attack against St. Privat was forced to halt 500 to 600 paces in front of the position. The losses here were also enormous and, according to General von Pape's estimate, amounted to 3000 in a very short time. As in the 3d and 4th Brigade there were battalions here which lost all of their officers.

This stage of the battle showed, as it was also shown at other points, in what the German soldiers were superior to the French, namely, in the stubborn adherence to the attack. The troops maintained their foothold in front of St. Privat with great tenacity, as they did in front of Amanvillers. One thing must be remarked. The Corps Canrobert remained

entirely passive. No counter attack was made. This trial was saved the Guard at St. Privat.

On this glaxis-like slope the long range effect of the French rifles caused the attacking troops great losses. According to the statements of General von Pape the French troops fired high above the attackers at 500 to 600 paces. Statements differ according to the terrain. For instance, the 4th Guard Regiment states—it advanced in a more favorable terrain than did the 1st Brigade—that it had the greatest losses at 400 paces. According to my opinion the French were given to firing too high at short ranges.

When the force of the resistance was perceived, General von Pape sent back the most urgent appeals to the artillery for support.¹ General von Budritski ordered his divisional artillery to move ahead. Now only the artillery opened fire directly on St. Privat. The artillery line of the Guard Corps between Habonville and St. Privat advanced by echelons. The remaining batteries of the corps artillery also went into position a little to the right of these batteries. A part of them, however, was directed to fire on the opponent at Amanvillers. This was about at 7 p.m.²

About this time help approached through the Saxons.

The 48th Brigade advanced directly on St. Privat; of the 45th Brigade, which as stated above had approached Roncourt from the west, several bodies of troops also turned against St. Privat on request of the Guard Corps, but in doing so crossed their march with parts of the 48th Brigade coming from the north.

Two Saxon batteries were firing on St. Privat. Later the entire Saxon artillery line turned to the right and formed in a new line about 1400 paces from St. Privat.

Of course that artillery could not have been in action very long, as the assault was now made by the Guards and

¹General von Pape states in his report that he had sent off his adjutant with instructions to make it clear that support should be rendered, or the artillery be held responsible for any failure.

²General von Pape maintains with determination that only five batteries, three Guard and two Saxon batteries, fired directly on St. Privat.

Saxons and, carried out by both with unusual energy, brought this French bulwark into our hands.¹

The following were present in reserve or coming up: the 46th and the 47th Brigades, the Guard Fusilier Regiment, which had been held back in Ste. Marie with the Guard Jägers, and the 20th Division.

Only at 6 p.m. did the 10th Corps receive orders from army headquarters to advance on St. Ail. Its artillery in part entered the artillery lines of the Guards and Saxons.

The 6th French Corps retreated in confusion. The Grenadier Division of the Guard, sent up by order of Bazaine, arrived too late. An enormous German artillery line formed itself south and north of St. Privat and kept up the fire fight with the hostile artillery, which attempted to cover the retreat, until after 9 p.m.

The entire French position was untenable and the French army fell back on Metz during the night. The total losses of the Germans were 899 officers and 19,260 men; those of the Guard Corps alone 307 officers, 7,923 men. Two guns of the 9th Corps were lost.

The French lost 589 officers and 12,273 men.

The battle leadership of the IId Army at the beginning of the afternoon has been characterized as excellent.

Concerning the orders from that time on the following should be noticed: since the battle line had greatly to be extended, owing to the movements of the 12th Corps to the north, it would probably have been advisable to have drawn the 10th Corps toward St. Privat earlier, for security in case of a reverse or for participation in the final assault on St. Privat. As the 10th Corps reached Batilly at 2.30 p.m., this could easily have been done. Had it been done, the 1st Guard Division would have been able to have sent in its five regiments at once against St. Privat. We may well question whether the preparations for the attack on St. Privat

¹General von Pape, who was accustomed to demand the highest exertions of his troops, and was a true Spartan in his way of thinking and acting, recounted in a letter in 1874 the force of the Saxon attack and praised it, and that is saying a great deal for him, for it cannot be denied that the achievements of other troops were in his eyes put into the background as compared with those of his own troops.

would not have been better regulated by army headquarters, either by the army commander himself proceeding to Ste. Marie, or by his exactly stating in definite orders the time the attack should begin.

The careful leadership of the 12th Army Corps has been generally praised. Still, doubt has been expressed whether it was necessary to reach out beyond Montois. As we can view things now this was not necessary, as nothing was encountered there and almost nothing in Roncourt. But this could not be known at that time, the less so since as a matter of fact the 47th Brigade, after the capture of Ste. Marie, encountered serious opposition in the vicinity of Roncourt. Canrobert drew his troops back on St. Privat only in the face of the movements of the Saxons.

On the other hand, as already remarked, there appears very little valid excuse for drawing the 47th Brigade from Ste. Marie to the woods of Auboué, and the same may be said of the delay arising at Montois, caused by the orders issued to the 45th Brigade to await the arrival of the 48th Brigade. For the fact that Montois was not occupied could have been learned by cavalry reconnaissance.

A military writer held in high esteem by us states that the battle would have been lost if the French Guard Grenadier Division had arrived about one hour and fifteen minutes earlier. General von Pape is of the same opinion.¹ And, as a matter of fact, had Canrobert utilized it correctly for a counter attack round the north side of St. Privat on the left flank of the 1st Guard Infantry Division at the moment when that division was bleeding to death in front of St. Privat, or had he utilized it to oppose the Saxons, it is a serious question whether the approaching Saxon reserve brigades and the 20th Division would have been or would not have been able to change the day into victory. The battle probably would have remained undecided and would again have been taken up the next day with the help of the army reserves, the 2d, 3d, and 10th Corps.

But all these are suppositions.

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¹Expressed in his letter of 1877.

The Initiative of King Albert in the Campaign of 1870-71¹

BY

Baron VON HODENBERG

General of Infantry

IN the following articles it is the intention to discuss those important events in which the King^{2 3} exercised a decisive influence in his capacity as commanding general of the Saxon Army Corps and as commander of the Army of the Maas, and not to give a continuous narrative of the campaign. An attempt will be made to indicate as clearly as possible the conditions under which the King arrived at his decisions, also the nature of any orders which he may have received from higher authorities. Proof will be offered to show that he exercised at all times excellent judgment in his independent course of action and in council and that he showed on all occasions a decided preference for energetic offensive measures.

The course of operations and battles will be only generally discussed; with the exception of the battle of St. Privat, because in that battle the activity of the King cannot be described without going into details. Military history knows the King only as Crown Prince of Saxony and therefore he must be so designated in what follows.

I. The leading of the 12th (Royal Saxon) Corps at Gravelotte—St. Privat la Montagne on the 18th of August, 1870.

The corps, which was attached to the II^d Army, did not arrive on the first line, with the exception of the cavalry

¹ From the *Wissenschaftliche Beilage* No. 44 to the *Leipziger Zeitung*, 1898. One of a series under the same title.

² Of Saxony—Trsl.

³ Field Marshal and last possessor of the Grand Cross of the Order of the Iron Cross.

division, until the 17th of August. It passed the succeeding night with the 23d Division at Mars la Tour, and Headquarters and the 24th Division at Puxieux.

Prince Frederick Charles placed it on the left wing of his army for August 18th and assembled the commanding generals of the Guard, 10th and 11th Corps at 5 a.m. at Mars la Tour and issued to them the following orders:

Today the IId Army will continue the advance for the purpose of carrying out the orders already given, i. e., to drive the enemy away from Verdun and Châlons and to attack him wherever found. For that purpose the 12th Corps will start immediately as extreme left wing, to be followed in the right rear by the Guard Corps, the latter being similarly followed by the 9th Corps. The 12th Corps will take direction on Jarny, the Guard Corps on Doncourt, the 9th Corps will advance between Vionville and Rezonville, thereafter passing on the right of St. Marcel. The 3d * * * 10th * * * The enemy is said to have been in retreat last evening towards Conflans. It is also probable that the three divisions reported to have been in bivouac at Gravelotte have started; if not, they may have been attacked by General von Steinmetz, in which case the 9th Corps may become engaged first. Whether all of this may lead to a turn to the right by the IId Army cannot yet be determined. For the present it is only a question of a march of scarcely four miles. This march will not be made in long, thin march columns but the divisions will be closely massed; the corps artillery will march between the two divisions of each army corps.¹

Thereupon the 23d Division received orders at 5.20 a.m. to start its advance guard at once and to follow it after half an hour with one brigade on each side of the road, in assembly formation, the battalions in column toward the center with one-fourth platoon distance; the corps artillery on a broad front. The 24th Division was to follow in the same formation. The difficulties offered by the ravines (wooded in part) on both sides of Mars la Tour and by that village itself, caused the massing of the divisions to be delayed to a point north of the village. Only the corps artillery went round the west of the village. This caused a delay in the crossing of the Guard Corps marching from Hannonville toward Doncourt, which had already been discussed by the Crown Prince at Headquarters of the IId Army.² But that delay made its effect felt in the course of the day only

¹ General Staff Account, Vol. 2, pp. 682, 683. (See p. 49 *ante*.)

² *Ibid*.

in the fact that the reconnaissance of the Guard Corps was at first made by a single squadron, sent out at 6.30 a.m. by the commander of the 1st Guard Division, General von Pape. However, north of Mars la Tour, where the 12th Corps marched in mass, additional Guard cavalry could at any time have trotted through between the advance guard and the 23d Division, as well as between the latter and the 24th Division and in the south it could have ridden around Puxieux.

Much has been written, especially recently, concerning this crossing. Anyone who does not take terrain difficulties into consideration will be hard to convince, even though Schlichting¹ gravely doubts the possibility of movements in masses, by troops more than a brigade strong, in assembly formation in any terrain. For similar reasons, as prevailed at first in the case of the Saxons, according to *Operations of the IId Army*² the Guard Corps remained in the already existing march column formation. According to another source³ it marched in columns one behind the other and, as a matter of fact, only the 10th Corps appears to have advanced massed,⁴ which procedure could be only partly adopted later on by the 12th. Scherff discusses only the actual and possible consequences of blocking the march. In all of his numerous studies concerning all phases of the battle he gives due credit to the 12th Corps and especially to its illustrious commander by continuously referring to the fact that the corps always acted as one body. Boguslawski does not entirely approve of the manner of advance of the corps and considers that the sending ahead of an advance guard which took so much time was not necessary, since the cavalry division was out in front. However, that cavalry division was on the

¹General of Infantry, von Schlichting: *Taktische und strategische Grundsätze der Gegenwart*; 1897, vol. 1, p. 97.

²Von der Goltz: *Operations of the IId Army*. (See p. 59 ante.)

³General von Boguslawski: *Heerwesen und Kriegsführung*; 1897; p. 213. In the *Letters on Cavalry* by Kraft Prince of Hohenlohe, 1884, it is stated on page 22 that the Guard Corps advanced from Doncourt against St. Ail in one column, three battalions broad and closed in mass. (See p. 90 ante.)

⁴General of Infantry, von Scherff: *Unsere heutige Infanterie Taktik im Spiegel der Augustkämpfe 1870 um Metz*; 1893, p. 41. But in place of "23d Division" it should read "12th Corps". The 18th of August is also discussed in the third book of his *Kriegslehren*; 1895.

left flank, almost eight miles west of Jarny on the Metz—Etain road.

At 5.40 a.m. the leading elements of the infantry crossed, within the limits of Mars la Tour, the Metz—Verdun road¹ and after 9 a.m. the road was free for the Guard. The advance guard reached Jarny at 8.30 a.m. In the meantime it had received orders to continue the march through Labry on both sides of the Orne. The main body (23d Division) arrived at Jarny after 9 a.m. and remained there until 11.30 a.m. In view of this halt of several hours, ordered by higher headquarters, and which would have consumed even more hours except for the independent action of the Crown Prince, the starting time of the corps from the place of assembly north of Mars la Tour is of no importance. And yet the view has been expressed, and is still being expressed, that the corps could have been at St. Privat earlier if it had hastened its advance more. This is also contained in a general statement made by von Scherff.² He says: “Had the enemy’s position been perceived earlier and had then the II^d Army started the continuation of its movement from the line Jarny (12th Corps)—Doncourt (Guard Corps)—Caulre Ferme (9th Corps) 1½ to 2 hours earlier and massed, then the (as he expresses it) unsupported frontal attack of the Guard on St. Privat would not have been made; and this early ascertainment of the position and earlier advance would have been made possible had the 12th and Guard Corps (the 9th Corps not coming into consideration here) advanced in mass in the start and thus avoided the crossing.” But, as already stated, the reconnaissance need not have been interfered with by the crossing and, as far as an earlier start is concerned, the 12th Corps could without difficulty have started in mass from Jarny 1½ to 2 hours earlier, while the Guard Corps as a matter of fact reached the vicinity of Habonville—Anoux la Grange as early as 2.30 p.m., though the frontal attack on St. Privat was not begun until 5.15 p.m. from Ste. Marie aux Chênes—St. Ail.³ Thus both corps, and this is the main point, could have been 1½ to 2 hours earlier at St. Privat, even in

¹*Operations of the II^d Army*, (see p. 50 *ante*.)

²*Infanterie Taktik*, p. 44.

³General Staff Account, vol. 2; pp. 750, 770, 772, 860.

the march formation they took, had they received orders to do so.

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The reports, though contradictory in some instances, received by the Crown Prince up to 11.30 a.m. ought to have pointed out the presence of hostile, even if weaker, detachments at Ste. Marie aux Chênes and Moineville. In addition, army headquarters had sent copies of the following orders to the 9th and Guard Corps:

To the 9th Army Corps (at 10 a.m.): The corps will fall in and advance in the direction of Vernéville and La Folie. If the enemy is there with his right wing the battle will for the present be opened by deploying considerable artillery.

To the Guard Corps (at 10.15 a.m.): The Guard Corps will continue the advance through Doncourt to Vernéville and take position there for the support of the 9th Corps which is advancing on la Folie against the hostile right wing. Reconnaissance to the left through Amanvillers and St. Privat la Montagne, as well as early reports are desirable.

Concerning the Guard, an officer of corps headquarters, returning from Doncourt, reported that it had begun its deployment (*Aufmarsch*) at 10.25 a.m.

Therefore the Crown Prince had to assume that not only the 9th Corps but also the Guard Corps had already resumed their advance. As a matter of fact the 1st Guard Division had just then started. He therefore decided, although Army orders directed him to remain at Jarny until further orders, to resume his march and advance to the point where the enemy was reported to be. But, as there still was uncertainty, a deep formation was assumed and the following decisions were made at 11.30 a.m.:

That the advance guard remain in march on Moineville—Valleroy on both sides of the Orne; that the 24th Division proceed on the right to Ste. Marie aux Chênes; that the 23d Division and corps artillery proceed between to Bois de Ponty and Giraumont; that the 46th Brigade remain at Jarny at disposition of headquarters.

The report to Army Headquarters, which best shows the views of the Crown Prince, is as follows:

Jarny, 18 August, 11.45 a.m.

The enemy is reported to be at Moineville and Ste. Marie aux Chênes; therefore the 12th Army Corps advances against these two

points. Flank protection against Valleroy. I proceed to Fleury, later on to Jouaville. (sgd.) ALBERT,

*Crown Prince,
General of Infantry.*

That hereby the intentions of Army Headquarters had been anticipated is shown by the following orders, received at 12 noon:

Orders for the 12th Corps. Issued at 11.30 a.m.¹ The 12th Corps is ordered to march on Ste. Marie aux Chênes, to secure by cavalry against Briey and Conflans and to send as much cavalry as possible into the valley of the Mosel to interrupt railroad and telegraph to Thionville. The 7th, 8th, 9th and Guard Corps will, within two hours, attack the enemy, who is in position on the heights from Leipzick to Bois de Vaux, his rear toward Metz. The 2d, 3d, 10th and 12th Corps will follow in second line as support.

As the larger part of the corps had been started toward Ste. Marie aux Chênes, and as the uncertainty concerning the exact position of the enemy, so far found only in small detachments at the west of Ste. Marie, had not yet been dispelled, the Crown Prince kept to the movements already taking place and only called up the infantry brigade left at his disposition in Jarny and also the main body of the 12th Cavalry Division.

This division, under the orders of the corps commander, had been sent as early as the 16th toward the Maas to Noussard by orders of army headquarters and had taken up connection by Captain von Klenck with the 10th Corps and with army headquarters on the battlefield of Mars la Tour.² This captain, charged with seeking out the 5th Cavalry Division, had ridden toward the sound of cannon and asked orders at about 7 o'clock from General von Voights-Rhetz concerning the bringing up of the division; but instead of orders he received the following letter, which was endorsed by Prince Frederick Charles' own signature:

¹General Staff Account, vol. 2, appendix 23; page 183 and correction of this appendix at conclusion of vol. 2.

²Ibid, vol. I, p. 655; *Operationen der II Armee*, p. 106; *War Diary of the 1st Squadron Guard Cavalry Regiment*, by Captain von Klenck; 1895, (See p. 105 ante.)

It is desirable that at daybreak tomorrow morning everything which is disposable appear at Tronville, provided Prince Frederick Charles makes no other dispositions.

(sgd.) PRINCE FREDERICK CHARLES and
GENERAL VON VOIGTS-RHETZ.

This letter was handed to Prince George of Saxony after 10 p.m. in Regniéville and was published by him to his own and to headquarters of the Guard Corps and caused the immediate start of the 23d Division for Thiaucourt and the assembly during the night of the Guard Corps. The advance of these troops and all the others in the second line was made early on the 17th by direct orders from army headquarters, as well as the advance of the 12th Cavalry Division against the road from Metz to Verdun. The Crown Prince in addition directed the 12th Cavalry Division that, should no enemy be found on the southern road, it was to at once advance to the northern road. The cavalry reached that road (the northern) as early as 9 o'clock at St. Jean les Buzy, the Crown Prince having set the starting time at 4 a.m., and, to make sure of that start, he had personally instructed the lieutenant von Trebra carrying these orders during the night to ride as rapidly as possible.¹ It was ascertained that the Emperor Napoleon had ridden through the village the preceding evening with a strong guard from Metz, but that otherwise no troops had passed in the same direction. The division remained there until early on the 18th of August without seeing an enemy. A few dispersed or lost soldiers had been captured, whose statements appeared to be of importance. Second Lieutenant von Hinüber started with these prisoners at 3 p.m., August 17th, from St. Jean les Buzy and in Puxieux received orders from the Crown Prince to deliver them to Army Headquarters in Buxières. Prince Frederick Charles personally conversed with the lieutenant and expressed his satisfaction with the achievements of the division.² Sev-

¹Colonel von Schimpff: *König Albert 50 Jahre Soldat*; 1893; p. 201.

²*Operations of the IId Army*; (see p. 48 footnote ante) and *Bericht des Lieutenants von Hinüber*.

eral works¹ give the occupation of the Metz—Conflans—Etain road as having occurred on the forenoon of August 17th; it should be stated here, however, that the Metz—Briey road was not reached by German cavalry until the forenoon of August 18th.

During the night of August 17-18, General Count Lippe, camped with the main body at Parfondrupt, had placed it in position at Puxe in consonance with orders given from Mars la Tour at 5.20 a.m. and was already marching on his own responsibility to the battlefield when he received orders to proceed there and at the same time was directed to reconnoiter anew towards Briey. The 18th Uhlan Regiment was charged with that duty, the 17th Uhlan Regiment continuing its observation farther toward the west. Therefore only the two heavy cavalry regiments and the horse battery made connection with the corps at 3 p.m. at the Bois de Ponty. The compact part of the cavalry division soon after numbered only six squadrons and one horse battery, because in consonance with orders received from headquarters two squadrons were detached at 4 p.m. which interrupted railroad and telegraph south of Diedenhofen at Uckange and Richemont between 7 and 8 p.m. This caused the first report from Marshal Bazaine concerning the events of the 18th of August to be delayed in reaching the hands of Emperor Napoleon and Marshal MacMahon until the 22d of August.² Opportunity should here be taken to anticipate our account and add that pioneers destroyed also the railroad and telegraph east of Longuion at Mercy le Bas in the night of August 18-19th.

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After this digression we now return to the Crown Prince, who awaited, eagerly, on the rise south of Batilly, the further developments of the situation, especially as the noise of battle in the east became steadily stronger and seemed to finally indicate that a greater part of the army was already

¹Hönig: *24 Stunden Moltkescher Strategie*; 1893.—*Die Ursachen der Siege und Niederlagen im Kriege 1870*, by Woide, Lieut-General of the Russian General Staff, translated, Berlin, 1896; vol. 2; page 9—Kunz: *Die Thätigkeit der deutschen Reiterei vom 15—18 August 1870 vor Metz*; 1891; p. 44.

²Bazaine's Court-Martial.

engaged in a heavy battle. Each message reaching his hands stated that the hostile right wing was farther north; the last ones stated it to be at St. Privat and Roncourt. The corps, however, was advancing in just that direction. A new situation confronted the Crown Prince at 1.30 p.m., brought about by the return of Captain von der Planitz who had been sent ahead. He had found Ste. Marie aux Chênes still free of the enemy at 12.30 p.m. and had also seen from there that St. Privat was held in strong force and that that place, situated on a height, offered a remarkable degree of resistance against an attack from the west, all of which he reported in great detail.

The Crown Prince, examining the map, listened to Captain von der Planitz without saying a word and when the latter had concluded spoke about as follows: "In that case we will not attack that position in front, but will envelop it," and made a corresponding motion with his left arm. The sudden decision was then carefully considered in regard to its execution, for which there was, in this case, plenty of time. The reports which arrived in the meantime from the 23d Division stated, that at least one hostile division was at St. Privat and Roncourt, but no enemy at Auboué and that consequently the division had likewise continued its march toward Ste. Marie. The advance guard reported that it had no enemy in front on either side of the Orne and that Briey was free of the enemy. All these reports strengthened the estimate already entertained and now, at 2 p.m., it was ordered that the 24th Division and corps artillery should continue their movement toward Ste. Marie aux Chênes, that the 23d Division should proceed through Coinville and the groves east of Auboué towards Roncourt, and that the 48th Brigade should halt behind the woods of Batilly and remain at the disposition of the Crown Prince. As always, but in this case in duplicate, the Crown Prince reported his measures to Prince Frederick Charles and also sent information thereof to the Guard Corps—proof that he was fully cognizant of the importance of the measures taken. This information was received at 3 o'clock at army headquarters, which repeatedly directed an occupation of the lower valley of the Mosel, but issued no other orders on that day to the 12th

Corps. This led to the justified assumption even during the battle that the independent measures taken then and later on were approved.

The following is a verbatim copy of the report:

Sent 18th Aug., 2.30 p.m. from Batilly. The Saxon Army Corps advances with its 24th Infantry Division on Ste. Marie aux Chênes and with its 23d Infantry Division envelops the French right wing by way of Coinville and the small woods situated between there and Roncourt.

ALBERT,

Crown Prince,

General of Infantry.

In the meantime, about 1 p.m., the French 6th Corps, Canrobert, in position on the hostile right wing from St. Privat to Roncourt, had sent infantry in advance of this line as far as Ste. Marie aux Chênes, which place Captain von der Planitz had found free of the enemy, and also towards St. Ail. Thus the first contact took place there, leading to the capture of Ste. Marie aux Chênes at about 3.30 p.m. This battle was conducted by General von Pape, the commanding general of the 1st Guard Division, and General von Nehrhoff, the commanding general of the 24th Division, after they had consulted together. The left wing of the Guards pressed forward from St. Ail, the 47th Brigade from the west, and both entered the village at 3.30 p.m. Of the 23d Division, three batteries and the 3d Battalion of the rifle regiment No. 108, participated in the battle. The Crown Prince found no occasion for interference at any stage of the fight. He viewed the excellently conducted advance of the 47th Brigade under Colonel von Leonhardi from the Saxon artillery's main position and enjoyed it. But when a stronger part of this brigade became visible on the other side of the village and at the same time the advance of new hostile infantry from the direction of St. Privat was noted, he sent definite orders, which in the meantime General von Nehrhoff had also issued, that the troops confine themselves to the holding of Ste. Marie. General von Pape had also issued similar orders to govern those parts of the Guard which had entered the village. An unsupported advance of weak forces against the strong hostile front would have led to the useless annihilation of the former and would have brought

about the most dire consequences. The Saxon Infantry had suffered severe losses in front of the village and had been able to hold their own on the wings against the repeated French attacks only with great difficulty. The retrograde movement of the infantry appeared at the time, as to the Guards, to be a forced one, since they were in ignorance of the fact that the infantry had been called back—the orders for which (issued by the Crown Prince), I personally carried—and this view, natural, though incorrect, has not entirely disappeared even now.¹ Such a view should be combatted. The enemy is as ignorant on that point as the General Staff Account.²

In the meantime 12 batteries went into position immediately northwest of Ste. Marie and fired on the offensive advances of the enemy and on the French artillery position at Roncourt. Batteries of the Guard Corps appeared on the other side of Ste. Marie. Throughout all this the conduct of the enemy was watched with the greatest attention. Roncourt and St. Privat showed themselves to be strongly held. From both places fresh troops were drawn forward. French infantry several times came close to Ste. Marie, while behind it was a numerous line of guns under fire, which appeared to prolong itself northward beyond Roncourt. It is said that cavalry patrols of the Guard Corps reported to Saxon corps headquarters that Montois la Montagne was occupied by the enemy.³ All this gave the Crown Prince the impression that under these conditions the movement made by the 23d Infantry Division, started through Coinville to Roncourt,

¹Account of an eyewitness in *Heerwesen und Kriegsführung*, p. 229. A comparison of the two descriptions will clearly indicate the other points with which we cannot agree.

²Rousset: *Histoire générale de la guerre Franco-Allemande*; 1895; vol. 2, pp. 119, 120. General Staff Account, vol. 2; pp. 761-763.

³*Operations of the IId Army*; (see p. 71 ante.) The excellent reconnaissance of the Guard Hussars in front of the Saxon front has not been forgotten. As is shown they frequently mistook Prince George of Saxony for the Crown Prince and this report probably was delivered to the former. It is impossible that a report was received by corps headquarters or the 23d Division (before the envelopment [4.30 p.m.,] through Montois) to the effect that the country around Montois and Roncourt was free of the enemy, with exception of a few patrols, as is stated in *Heerwesen und Kriegsführung*, page 231. This must be an error. Probably the words "and Roncourt" were unintentionally added.

would not be an enveloping movement but would still continue to be a frontal one, and as he was firmly determined to execute the plan already determined upon of enveloping the French wing, whatever might happen, he came to the conclusion that the movement must be extended and therefore executed with larger forces. Prince George therefore received proper orders and the 48th Brigade, thus far kept at Batilly at the disposition of headquarters, was also assigned to his command. General Count Lippe also received orders for that part of the cavalry division which was at hand to join the enveloping movement and to try and reach the enemy's rear. The divisional cavalry regiment of the 24th Infantry Division took the same road. The 47th Brigade and the artillery of the 24th Division and the corps artillery were left north of Ste. Marie for the present.

From now on everything depended on the success which the enveloping troops would have. There were 21 battalions,¹ 13 squadrons, and 5 batteries. At Ste. Marie were only 7 battalions, 1 squadron,² and 11 batteries. In spite of this the Crown Prince remained for the present with that small portion of the corps, in order not to lose sight of the hostile position and to keep closer touch with army headquarters and the Guard Corps. Even before the battle at Ste. Marie, headquarters of the Guard and 12th Corps had exchanged officers for the purpose of sending reports.

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From his position the Crown Prince now saw the renewed advance of French infantry from Roncourt against Auboué; he caused therefore the 23d Infantry Division to at once advance infantry to the woods situated between the two villages.

We shall now turn to the left wing of the corps.

When Prince George received the first orders for the enveloping movement at 2.45 p.m., he had also already started, without orders, with the leading part of his division from the Bois de Ponty to Ste. Marie, from where came sound of cannon

¹One battalion still marching from Pont à Mousson (the 2d Bn. 106th Regt.), where it had been detached as guard at Royal Headquarters.

²With the corps artillery.

fire—this in consequence of reports that in the very front of the division and at Auboué no enemy was to be seen, but that at least one hostile division was at Roncourt—St. Privat. From the hill west of Ste. Marie he perceived, however, that not only the 24th Division but also troops of the Guards were opposite the village. He therefore rightly sought to employ his troops farther to the north and turned against Auboué, to which point the orders which had just arrived for the enveloping movement also called him. With equal independence did General von Craushaar advance with the advance guard from Valleroy, because no enemy was found as far as beyond Briey. He now received orders, like the 46th Brigade, to proceed to Auboué. The parts of the 23d Infantry Division which were engaged in the battle at Ste. Marie, did not come up until after the conclusion of the battle.

Woide,¹ who otherwise greatly praises the leadership of the Crown Prince and the conduct of the 12th Army Corps, at least on this day, disapproves of this marching to the sound of cannon and sees therein a disregard of the general situation or faults in the orders for the enveloping movement. However, during a battle no one knows the entire situation, least of all division or brigade commanders; and Prince George and General von Craushaar estimated the situation quite correctly, as is shown above. The orders for the enveloping movement, however, did not arrive until later.

The extension of the enveloping movement, ordered by the second orders (received 4.30 o'clock), was accomplished by the Prince by letting the 48th Brigade which had shortly thereafter arrived at Auboué, and three batteries and the divisional cavalry, continue their march in the valley of the Orne, in order to attack from Montois, while the 46th Brigade and one battery advanced through Moineville and the 45th Brigade engaged the enemy in the woods between Auboué and Roncourt, taking those woods at 5.15 o'clock. In the further advance it came in touch with the extreme left wing of the Guards, which had been forced against Roncourt, but waited with its own attack for the enveloping col-

¹Woide, vol. 2; page 91.

umn. The 1st Battalion, 2d Grenadier Regiment No. 101 observed from woods situated opposite them the hostile detachments in position in Montois and the woods southeast of there and replied to the hostile fire with only a few scattered shots on account of the long range. An attack, which had already been ordered, was countermanded by orders from higher headquarters.

According to Dick de Lonlay¹ one or two companies stood in the direction of Montois in the afternoon. According to Rousset² one battalion of the 9th Regiment was sent at about 4.30 p.m. at the double time to Montois. According to the same writer only the 9th Regiment was at Roncourt, and the 94th Regiment from Ste. Marie and the Brigade Péchot (7 battalions) were not brought there until later. The French troops battling between Roncourt and St. Privat were not taken into account.

In consideration of the conditions which ensued later on at St. Privat, it might be well at this point to consider the important and much discussed question as to whether or not the enveloping movement ought to have been so much extended. Aside from the fact that at 4.30 p.m. it could not be foreseen at Auboué what shape the battle in which the Guards were engaged might assume, this question is answered by a glance at the map, which shows that the route taken was the most natural one. The *Operations of the II^d Army*³ makes the following statement to the same effect:

If it was the intention that this enveloping movement be executed with as much concealment from the enemy as possible and with assured hope of decisive results, it had to be done under protection of the steep hills west of Montois, passing Joeuf in the valley of the Orne.

After what is generally recognized to have been a most brilliant march the enveloping column ascended at 6 o'clock the top of the hill near Montois, which had been evacuated by the enemy and, at 6.30 p.m. the 48th and 45th Brigades

¹Dick de Lonlay: *Français et Allemands*; 1888; IV, 91.

²Rousset, vol. 2; p. 212. On page 137 he says that this battalion had been driven off by parts of the 48th Brigade. This is an error. Montois had already been given up when the brigade arrived there. Dick de Lonlay and other writers give a different account but all seem to believe that at Roncourt about one division went into action.

³*Operations of the II^d Army*; (see page 71 ante.)

came together in and around Roncourt. There was no engagement for the possession of the village; the French detachments driven to that place retreated through and past Roncourt into the forest, firing but little, since Marshal Canrobert in the meantime had drawn back his right wing toward St. Privat before the advance of the enveloping column, leaving behind those parts of his command which were in front of Roncourt. This movement, favored by the features of the terrain, could not be perceived by the attacking column. Otherwise the attack of the 45th Brigade would naturally have taken place sooner.

But General von Craushaar learned of it before the right wing of his brigade, with which he was, had reached the heights of Roncourt and, being urgently requested by an orderly officer of the 1st Guard Division to interfere at St. Privat, turned toward that point at 6.15 p.m. with the nearest parts of his brigade, which were followed by the rest. The report of his action which he sent by a mounted orderly to Prince George went astray. For the same reason Lieutenant Colonel von Schweinitz, with two battalions of the 107th Regiment, had remained on the march to St. Privat on the direct road past Roncourt. In and around Roncourt occurred a simultaneous movement to the east and south which could not at once be brought into order. In addition, the extreme left wing of the 48th Brigade under Colonel von Abendroth became engaged on the edge of the forest of Jaumont in a serious battle and the flank fire coming from there brought the advance of General Senfft von Pilsach with the two heavy regiments of divisional cavalry to a stand.

The Crown Prince had remained at Ste. Marie until after 6 p.m. For the sake of absolute security he had also sent orders from there to the 46th Brigade, which reached that brigade at Moineville at 5.15 p.m.; thereafter he had moved up the 12 batteries, under Colonel Juncke, which were near him, closer to Roncourt, so that their left wing touched the woods mentioned several times above; and finally, at 5.30 p.m., he had caused the 47th Brigade to proceed to Roncourt also and had finally concentrated his whole corps there, where the decision was about to take place. To this place he then also proceeded himself.

Critics have rightly discussed subsequently the possibility and the consequences of an offensive counter attack by the French army reserve which, however, was not started (by the Guard Corps) until afternoon and then only in part from the French left to the German right wing and which did not come into action there.¹ The Crown Prince had still more reason to reckon with this counter attack at the start and, outside of the 13 squadrons assembled on the extreme wing, he could count with certainty only on the 47th Brigade. That brigade was therefore held in reserve. When he met the 46th brigade on his way, he directed it to debouch toward St. Privat, because from his recent position he had observed the driving off of hostile batteries north of St. Privat and movements of French infantry from Roncourt toward St. Privat. He had also observed that the progress of the infantry attack begun by the Guards about an hour before was diminishing on account of the strength of the position and unusual losses suffered by the Guards. While still in uncertainty as to the situation at Roncourt, General von Montbe received orders to proceed to Prince George and ask for his approval, which was granted.

As soon as the Crown Prince, in the continuation of his ride, had perceived the change of conditions which had meanwhile occurred, he supplemented the fire of the 2 batteries, firing against the north side of St. Privat, by 12 batteries at 1400 yards range. The fire of the first battery going into position there was opened at 6.45 p.m. He abstained from any further interference. Any interference on his part was not at all required, for Prince George, after gaining knowledge of the conditions as we have described them, had shortly after 6.30 p.m. issued orders for a general advance on St. Privat, which advance was devoid of unity, however, on account of the general endeavor to come to the relief of the much suffering, heroic Guards as soon as possible. The line of attack, at the start hardly 6 battalions strong, was gradually increased to a total of 11 battalions—mixed among them were 7 Guard companies which had reached Roncourt. Of these, 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ battalions, supported by 14 batteries, advanced on the

¹For details of this see Kunz: *Zur Geschichte der Kaiserlichen französischen Garde*; 1898; page 51.

right, straight against the village, 2½ battalions against the open terrain between the village and the forest, on the left 3 battalions, supported by 2 batteries, against the stone quarries of Jaumont. In the second line followed eight battalions of the center, 2 battalions and 13 squadrons of the left group. In the third line stood seven more battalions in readiness behind the right wing. Thus the closed reserves consisted of 17 battalions and 13 squadrons. Simultaneously, the Guard Corps advanced on the right of the 12th Corps in general against the west and southwest side of St. Privat, but the interior wings overlapped each other and the advance of both corps transformed itself into a combined action.

The Crown Prince eagerly awaited the decision (he was at that time about halfway between Roncourt and St. Privat and had there met Prince George¹) and felt a sense of great relief when he heard, above the terrible thunder of cannon and continuous roll of infantry fire, repeated hurrahs—St. Privat had been taken after a hot fight. Just as the sun was disappearing in the west, at 7.30 p.m., the Guards and Saxon troops stormed the village in conjunction and, with bayonet and butt, in hand-to-hand conflict, broke the strong resistance still stubbornly maintained in the interior of the village, which, burning in several places, lighted up the evening sky with leaping red flames. As General von Craushaar had fallen, General von Pape took command of the Saxons in the village. It was not necessary for the reserves to support the Saxon troops. The battle in the quarries of Jaumont had also been carried to a victorious end without the aid of the reserves. Approaching darkness and the forest prevented the pursuit. It is true that two Guard cavalry squadrons under Colonel von Carlowitz charged ahead, but they saw in their front a new hostile artillery line and under these conditions the 46th Brigade and the rifle regiment were also forced to halt northeast of St. Privat. At that place Saxon artillery soon went into action, as it found room. This artillery and numerous Prussian batteries the other side of the village kept up the fire until complete darkness had set in. Thus ended the day

¹*König Albert, 50 Jahre Soldat*; page 218.

with a complete victory of the two corps of the German left wing. Under the effect of the heavy losses at St. Privat the French Army of the Rhine, which in the main had held its positions, retreated, in the evening and during the subsequent night, to the protection afforded by the fortress works of Metz.

Helmuth¹ says: "As a matter of fact the final decision of the heavy battle must be credited to the assistance of the Saxon corps, carried through both by the pressure of its concerted action and by the heroic deeds and immediate attack of the separate battalions. Let all due credit therefore be given without reserve to the Saxons; however, impartial judgment will, with equal readiness, acknowledge the truth of the statement that only in consequence of the situation brought about by the Guards with their own force and with so many sacrifices was the victory so quickly and completely won." This we fully acknowledge. The conduct of the Guards in the heavy and long baptism of fire, which they gloriously endured on the 18th of August, will for all time to come excite the admiration of the true soldier.

* * *

In consequence of the situation as described the decisive Saxon attack finally took the shape of an enveloping of the hostile right wing from the north. General von Moltke had directed that movement in a letter to Headquarters of the IId Army dated 10.30 a.m. These instructions, issued by orders of King William,² were based on the assumption that the French wing stood south of Amanvillers, and ordered the enveloping of this wing by the Guard and the 12th Corps. They concluded with the following words: "The attack should be made simultaneously by the Ist Army from the Bois de Vaux and Gravelotte, by the 9th Corps against the Bois de Genivaux and Vernéville, by the left wing of the IId Army from the north." It should be mentioned here that the same decision, which General von Moltke in the start and before he knew the extension of the

¹*The Prussian Guard on the 18th of August 1870.* Lecture given in the "Wissenschaftlichen Verein," Berlin; by Helmuth, Captain of the General Staff, 1873; (see p. 28 ante.)

²General Staff Account; vol. 2; page 691.

hostile position designated as the final object of the day, was arrived at quite independently by the Crown Prince from his more intimate knowledge of that extension and from the difficulties of a frontal attack, about 3½ hours after General von Moltke's decision and enlarged on about 5½ hours later; for in the orders issued about 11.30 a.m. by the IId Army to the 12th Corps (as recited above), this basic plan of battle was not expressed and was not known at all by the 12th Corps the entire day. This seems remarkable at the first glance, as well as the fact that army headquarters left the Crown Prince such a free hand. Upon closer examination, however, this appears quite natural. When Prince Frederick Charles sent the last mentioned orders, he assumed the hostile wing to be at Leipzick, and could only approach the enveloping movement, set as the final objective of the day, by stationing the Guard Corps on the left of the 9th Corps and causing all other corps to follow. Therefore, as far as the 12th Corps was concerned, he confined himself for the present to directing its march toward Ste. Marie which at that time seemed suitable for the enveloping movement to be undertaken later. There was no need for him to add instructions as to how, when and where it should attack, because according to the view of army headquarters the corps would have arrived in the second line by this march, as is indicated in these orders. When these orders reached the corps it was already in march on Ste. Marie and the later reports of the Crown Prince, who was closer to the hostile wing than army headquarters and consequently knew earlier the situation than did that headquarters, show that the corps executed independently exactly what was laid down in Moltke's instructions. Thus army headquarters had no reason at all for interference. From its location at Habonville it could view the terrain as far as St. Privat¹ and repeatedly sent officers to the 12th Corps. Thus, at 3 p.m. Major von Werder arrived to gather information concerning the battle at Ste. Marie. Thereafter another officer delivered the following letter:

¹General Colmar Baron von der Goltz in *Krieg und Sieg*; page 169; *ibid*; page 157; also in his *Operations of the IId Army*, (p. 69, 70 *ante*.)

18 Aug. 3.45 p.m. at Habonville.

I call Your Royal Highness' attention to the fact that the only communications of the *beaten* French army with Paris are in the valley of the Mosel on the left bank of that river. It is therefore of the utmost importance for the decision of the campaign that your Highness' cavalry destroy, completely, the Metz—Thionville telegraph and railroad as soon as possible and that you occupy, if possible, the valley of the Mosel. So far, thank God, everything is going well.

FREDERICK CHARLES.

About 7 p.m. Lieutenant von König brought the following orders:

18 Aug., 6.40 p.m.

In spite of single infantry attacks of the enemy the battle appears to have been won.¹ It is of the utmost importance to advance without delay today, in spite of the great exhaustion of the infantry, with at least one infantry brigade of the 12th Corps to Woippy in order there thoroughly to interrupt the railroad and telegraph.

FREDERICK CHARLES.

After the close of the battle army headquarters finally issued the following closing orders at 8.30 p.m.:²

The army corps will go into bivouac in the locations occupied at the close of the battle; infantry outposts to be placed which must take up connection with the neighboring corps and which must be prepared for the possibility that the enemy in desperation may attempt to cut his way through during the night. At 5 a.m. tomorrow all chiefs of staff will report in Caulre Ferme to report where their corps are located and to receive further orders. The attention of the 12th Corps is again called to the importance of reaching Woippy. Army headquarters proceeds for this night to Doncourt.

Woippy was not occupied by the reinforced 46th Infantry Brigade until the 19th of August, because Crown Prince Albert declined to execute a movement through the forest in front during the night for the reason that, in spite of the enemy's retreat, it could not be ascertained, because of the darkness and density of the forest, what the conditions were with the enemy who still showed a strong artillery line. The evening orders of army headquarters show that they estimated the situation after the battle similarly and

¹From the location of the Headquarters of the Army this renewed advance of the right wing of the Guard had been observed and the interference of the Saxon artillery had also been heard. See *Operations of the II^d Army*; (p. 76 ante.)

²General Staff Account; vol. 3; page 909.

did not expect the advance to be made until the succeeding day.

It is not generally known that Moltke's instructions of 10.30 a.m. were anticipated, independently, by the Crown Prince, worked out from the conditions of the enemy and carried out by him.¹ A few accounts of the battle state that the Crown Prince's enveloping movement of the hostile right wing was due to higher orders and in ignorance of actual conditions. In other accounts the view seems to be held that the 12th Corps had received some intimation before the beginning of the enveloping movement of Moltke's instructions or at least a hint (if not in writing in some other manner); or, finally, that the enveloping movement had been planned in advance and that the corps had knowledge thereof. These accounts thus mention the independent action of the Crown Prince either not at all, or force it more or less into the back ground and thus do him an injustice, for none of these suppositions are true. However, every one acknowledges the fact that Crown Prince Albert did decide the battle of Gravelotte—St. Privat la Montagne—the glorious day of victory of the Guards and Saxons.

¹The best account of this is given in Woide, pp. 86, 87 & 94. See also *Anleitung zum Studium der Kriegsgeschichte*; supplementary volume—1894, page 100—von Schimpff, *Der Feldzug von 1870-71*; 1896; page 33; *Organ für die milit. wissensch. Vereine*, Vienna, 1892; pp. 412, 413.

FROM
The XIIth Corps in the
War of 1870-71¹

(*Chapters VII to XIII*)

BY
Colonel VON SCHIMPF

VII. The Day Before the Battle

THE arrangements made during the night for the march of the XIIth Corps to Mars la Tour were carried out on August 17th as ordered. The troops of the 24th Division quartered in Pont à Mousson were alarmed by signals at about 2 a.m. by orders of the Crown Prince² and proceeded to the place of assembly west of the town. After the arrival of the parts of the division which had been quartered and in camp in the neighborhood of the town, the division started the march at 3 a.m. The Crown Prince had mounted his horse at 2 a.m. and at 5 a.m. met, beyond Thiaucourt, the main body of the 23d Division, which had started at 3 a.m., and the corps artillery, which had been alarmed and started at 2 a.m., and, at Xammes, the reinforced 46th Brigade as advance guard.

The night had been pitch dark and it had taken a long time for the troops to reach their places of assembly from the villages and bivouacs.

The XIIth Corps stood assembled the other side of Thiaucourt. The peculiarity of the conformation of the plateau of the Mosel consists in the rolling terrain, in the soft, round lines of the ridges, and in the often very steep sides of the defiles which they form. Thus the small town of Thiaucourt lies one half in a ravine, the other half on the

¹Published Dresden, 1901.

²Of Saxony.

slope of a steep ridge which the vehicles had great difficulty in ascending. The town has but a single, narrow main street, is prettily built, and its general reputation for prosperity is not belied by its exterior aspect. The town is famed for its wine, and although its Saxon guests had no opportunity to enjoy any, there was time to build quick fires with poles from the vineyards and cook coffee which infused renewed warmth into the men, for the night had been remarkably cold for August. Wagons with wounded had already arrived in Thiaucourt. Nothing was learned of the engagement of the day before except that it had been very bloody and that the enemy had made no progress; also that a renewal of the battle on this day was very probable. To prepare for this contingency the pieces were loaded, knapsacks were removed for the subsequent march, coats rolled, kettles buckled to the coatrolls and the ammunition cases removed from the knapsacks and placed in the haversacks.

The march was continued by the corps as a unit. The cold morning had been succeeded by a hot August day. The air was sultry, the ground hard. The Crown Prince rode with the advance guard, followed by the 23d Division, the corps artillery, the 24th Division and the trains. The march led from Xammes to south of Hagéville, passed south of Chambley and, beyond Buxières, made a right angled turn northward toward Mars la Tour. The general opinion prevailed that the corps would today finally encounter the enemy. It was expected that the thunder of cannon in the distance would be heard at any moment. Wagon trains with wounded were met, as well as ammunition and provision columns going back to replenish. In spite of the heat and in spite of exhaustion—easily accounted for by the long and continuous marching—every man pressed forward imbued with the knowledge that not a moment was to be lost in bringing the looked for support to the hard pressed comrades in arms. No one desired to remain behind when in the more open country the columns of the Guards became visible, urged by the same desire, moving toward the same objective. These movements of enormous masses of troops, executed without any crossing, created a heart-thrilling impression on all. With that noble spirit, inherent even in

the private soldier in regard to the orders of his superior, everyone perceived the excellence and the surety of the measures taken by highest headquarters.

At 1 p.m. the advance guard arrived at Mars la Tour where the 23d Division went into bivouac while the corps artillery and the 24th Division camped in the vicinity of Puxieux. On the right, the Xth Corps had remained in its positions at Tronville; on the left, the Guards arrived at Hannonville.

Crown Prince Albert rode for a consultation with General von Voigts-Rhetz at the bivouac at Tronville, where great seriousness reigned after the hard and bloody battle of the preceding day, and made his headquarters in an unpretentious little house of the unimportant village of Puxieux. Mars la Tour, situated on the great military road from Metz to Verdun, covers with its solid buildings a large cross road and takes its name undoubtedly from an old, thick, round tower standing in the village and which appears to be very ancient.

During the afternoon the last troops arrived in their bivouacs. They had been en route for more than 12 hours and had covered a distance of 35 kilometers. The iron rations were used, as the provision wagons arrived only late in the evening. There was a general absence of water on the plateau.

For the operations in the vicinity of the enemy, during which teams and company wagons must remain behind and only the combat wagons of the battalions could be taken along, it was found advisable to load on these half or even only quarter rations of bacon and rice, which might be cooked at some longer halt. Because of the abundance of rations on hand, it was not difficult to supply the necessary amount. It is of great value to let the tired men know that arrangements have been made for their needs, and nothing raises the spirits of men in the field more than the welcome diversion of preparing a meal and having a sprightly fire. Even if the preparations are interrupted, on account of some unforeseen start, hope remains of securing the meal at the next halt. Nothing, on the other hand, is more de-

pressing than the knowledge that there are no means at hand for rapid refreshment.¹

Major von Einsiedel established outposts between the woods of Vionville and Ville sur Yron with the 3d Battalion, 102d Infantry Regiment, and the 5th Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, under Captain von Stammer. They were not in touch with the enemy.²

¹Von Einsiedel.

²Major von Einsiedel writes in his Memoirs: General von Montbé showed to me on the map a small watercourse running parallel with the Metz—Verdun road as the probable line of direction of the position of the outpost and charged me with seeking connection with the III^d Corps, which stood on our right at Vionville and with the Guard, which ought to arrive on our left in Hannonville in the course of the day.

Just outside of Mars la Tour we saw the first dead—Prussian dragoons and their horses. At a mill which we passed the small mill pond was surrounded with dead and much swelled up horses which in their death agonies had sought the water, and at this very time a Prussian Hussar squadron was watering its horses, the live horses stepping carefully between the dead ones to reach the water, in which many dead horses lay. Further on we came across the dead in rows and piles. It was one of the wildest parts of the battlefield to which we went on outpost. Here the 16th and 57th Regiments (Brigade Wedell of the Xth Corps) in their attack from Mars la Tour in the direction of Bruville had suffered enormous losses, as had also the 1st Guard Dragoon Regiment, which, by their self-sacrificing charge on the hostile infantry, had saved the beaten and pursued brigade from annihilation.

The position I took with the battalion was very simple. I formed the latter into two half battalions and directed each one to place one company on picket and one in support; patrols were sent to the front as far as Ferme Greyère and to the right into the forest of Vionville, thus keeping connection with the outposts of the III^d Corps. The squadron was on the road leading to Jarny and patrolled toward that place, taking up connection on the left toward Ville sur Yron with the Guard Corps which had arrived a few hours later. In addition, a platoon of infantry was attached to the squadron and a platoon of cavalry to the battalion, the latter platoon bivouacking alongside of the company in support on the Mars la Tour—Bruville road, where I also remained. The terrain was open and but few sentinels were required. I remained mounted until evening. The patrols did not bring any information of the enemy, who could nowhere be seen, and everything was just as tranquil with the neighboring corps. The only inconvenience was that this was the first time we were on outpost and that, in consequence, all higher commanders visited us and continually made suggestions for the improvement of our outpost disposition. When we have to establish an outpost in a foreign country, without loss of time, and on a line of about 5000 paces, the disposition will but seldom be at first in accordance with all rules, but, on getting better acquainted with the terrain, many improvements can be made later. It is my opinion that when the outpost position is but temporary and the enemy not in sight, it is permissible to overlook some irregularities, so as not to interrupt the men's rest and not confuse all in their just gained orientation by changes which require renewed instructions and messages to neighboring posts. Of course this is entirely different with

A splendid, clear summer evening preceded the tranquil night. On the quiet field could be seen the fearful seriousness of the battle. The dead were lying in long rows. Men were busy late into the night digging trenches between these rows to serve as graves. In those trenches the fallen heroes were laid to rest. There brooded a wonderful stillness above the camping army. The surroundings and the impressiveness of the battlefield were well suited to demonstrate the seriousness of the situation. Until late into the night the immediate situation was discussed around the bivouac fires. It was now known that the IIIrd and Xth Corps had fought against a considerable superiority on August 16th and had suffered enormous losses; that the battle was without any decision; that the enemy, after having spent the night on the battlefield, had retreated early on the 17th in the probable direction of Metz. Every one lay down in apprehension—many for their last slumber.

The cavalry division, alarmed and concentrated toward its right wing at Vigneulles, started at 5 a.m., August 17th. It marched through Hattonville, Avillers, Woël and Doncourt to Harville, arriving there at 7.30 a.m. As the wide Metz—Verdun road was completely clear of the enemy here, the division reported that fact at once to corps headquarters by two orderlies, resumed its march to the Metz—Etain road, and reached St. Jean les Buzy through Pareid, Villers and Parfondrupt. Patrols sent out in all directions during the march did not encounter any closed bodies of the enemy—

permanent outposts, for instance as at Paris, where we have to assume that none of our weak spots will escape the enemy's observation.

During my frequent inspections I came to all points where the battle had raged on this wing on August 16th. This side of the small, lower lying part of the valley which bounded our position Prussian infantrymen and dragoons lay as though mowed down with a scythe—the number of dead Frenchmen apparently being no less. There had been so much to do that not all wounded had been carried away, and therefore after we arrived our sanitary detachments were directed to help out. They remained on that duty until late at night before being able to state that there were no living left among the heaps of dead. Farther to the left only dead troopers and horses were seen. Patrols from the troops which had fought here came along to identify the dead and to kill wounded horses. In the graveyard near the mill officers of the Guard Corps were assembled to attend the burial of their dead comrades, whose bodies were lying alongside of the newly dug large grave. To keep guard in the midst of these pictures and scenes was the first illustration our men had of the seriousness of war.

only a few stragglers were seen at Jeandelize who gave themselves up as prisoners after a few shots had been exchanged. At St. Jean les Buzy the cavalry division learned from the clergyman, who was much confounded by the sudden appearance of hostile cavalry, that Emperor Napoleon had passed through that village the previous day with a strong escort and proceeded westward. The division took position at St. Jean les Buzy and secured against Etain, Metz and Verdun. The vidette posted on the main road brought in a higher French financial officer, M. Marguerie, who was on his way to Metz, and stated that he was a physician. In the afternoon the 3d Squadron of the Guard Cavalry, under Captain Platzmann, reconnoitered toward the north. It found Etain and the roads toward the east as far as the Orne free of the enemy. At 4 p.m. the division went into bivouac and procured rations by requisition. The 23d Brigade was at St. Jean, the 24th at Parfondrupt. At 12 midnight the division saddled up because the outposts had seen large bivouac fires in direction of Metz—fires of our own troops as ascertained later.

On the evening of August 17th and until the march was resumed on the 18th, Corps Headquarters had no definite information as to the enemy's situation, as it had only negative reports of reconnaissances in front and on the left flank. It was known that the terrain was clear of the enemy some few thousand paces in front of the outposts and that on August 17th the enemy had not retreated along the road to Fresnes, on which the corps bivouacked, nor along that through Etain, on which the cavalry division had been since 9 a.m. At 7 p.m. Lieutenant von Hinüber of the cavalry division arrived in Puxieux with prisoners whose statements appeared of importance. He was sent on with them to Prince Frederick Charles at Buxières, where he informed that Prince at the same time that no columns of the French were marching on the Metz—Etain road. The army commander expressed his approbation of the achievements of the 12th Cavalry Division.

Toward evening verbal orders from army headquarters reached Puxieux to the effect that the Crown Prince should report for a consultation with Prince Frederick Charles at

4.45 a.m., August 18th, at the southern exit of Mars la Tour and that at the same time the troops, after having cooked coffee, should be in readiness to start.

VIII. The Advance along the Metz—Etain Road

The morning of August 18th was magnificently beautiful and was followed by a bright, breezy day, not too hot. At Mars la Tour Prince Frederick Charles verbally issued his instructions to the assembled commanders of the Guard, Xth and XIIth Corps. The IId Army¹ was to continue for the present its advance along the Metz—Etain road, to drive the enemy away from Verdun and Châlons and to attack him wherever found. For that purpose the XIIth Corps was to start immediately as extreme left wing, the Guard Corps in its right rear and the IXth Corps in the right rear of the Guard Corps. The march objectives of the corps were Jarny, Doncourt and Caulre Ferme. The present object was only a march of about four miles or less; it could not yet be stated whether the army would then make a turn to the right or to the left.² The advance was not to be made

¹IId Army in the battle on August 18th:

	RIFLES	SABERS	GUNS
Guard Corps - - -	26,000	3,000	90
IId Corps - - -	22,000	1,100	84
IIId Corps - - -	14,000	1,100	84
IXth Corps - - -	19,000	1,600	90
Xth Corps - - -	17,000	1,000	84
XIIth Corps - - -	24,000	2,000	96
5th Cavalry Division		3,600	12
6th Cavalry Division		2,300	6

Relative strengths in the Franco-German war of 1870-71 to the Fall of the Empire.—*Kriegsgeschichtliche Einzelschriften, 1889; Part 11.*

²The battle of August 16th did not bring about a final decision. The German troops were exhausted on the battlefield on the evening of the day of battle. Fresh troops had to be brought up to permanently prevent the retreat of the French, thus far hindered at such great sacrifice. Thanks to the leaders' swiftness of decision and the energy of the troops, shortly after noon on August 17th five army corps had arrived alongside the IIId and Xth Corps: the VIIth and VIIIth Corps from the Ist Army on the right wing; the IXth Corps from the IId Army in the center; the Guard and the XIIth Corps on the left wing. These fresh troops were joined also by two fresh cavalry divisions (1st and 12th). The IId Corps also was approaching. Royal Headquarters, which had arrived at Flavigny, considered the question of an offensive to be immediately made on the evening of August 17th, but abandoned that plan and decided to bring about the decision on August 18th.

After the battles of August 16th Bazaine had decided to fall back to a position, impregnable according to his opinion. This position was

in long, thin march columns, but by divisions massed, the corps artillery to march between the two divisions of each army corps.

taken up on a ridge running northward and sloping gently to the west; the left wing touching the Mosel at Ste. Ruffine and Rozerieulles, about 6 km above Metz; the right wing coming close to the Orne at Roncourt. The broad slope of the position, facing the enemy, reinforced by battery embrasures and infantry trenches, 12 km in extension, fell down, glaucis-like and was open, while the short and steep slope in rear offered good protection to the reserves. Villages and farms had been prepared as supporting points. During the course of August 17th the French troops occupied their assigned positions: the 6th Corps on the right wing at St. Privat; the 2d Corps on the left wing at Le Point du Jour; the 4th Corps between them at Amanvillers; the 3d Corps on the heights of Leipzick; the Guards in reserve behind the left wing at Plappeville.

The two opposing armies spent the night of August 17-18th in a remarkable position—their wings, i. e. the German right and the French left, were in close touch, while their fronts were almost at right angles, that of the French being directed toward the west, that of the Germans toward the north. The opposite wings were about 20 km apart from each other.

The Germans had not kept the French army under sufficient observation on August 17th. The larger part of it had been lost sight of and its position was unknown on August 18th. There even was doubt whether the army was still at Metz or, at least in part, marching westward. Therefore King William ordered the IId Army to start at 5 a. m. August 18th, advancing by echelons from the left wing between the Yron and Gorze creeks. Of the Ist Army the VIIIth Corps joined the right wing of the IId Army near Gravelotte; the VIIth Corps securing the movement still farther to the right against possible hostile operation from Metz. Should the enemy be found marching off toward the northwest, the left wing was to reach him and compel him to stand; should he be found in front of Metz then a turn against him was facilitated by the march in echelons.

The VIIth Corps, in close touch with the enemy on the extreme right wing, remained at the start on the strict defensive; and the enemy did not attack. Four German army corps (XIIth, Guard, IXth and VIIIth) advanced from the base line Mars la Tour—Gravelotte in a northerly direction; behind them in second line the Xth and IIId Corps, on the powers of which latter not much reliance could be placed on account of the enormous losses suffered on the 16th of August; the IId Corps was coming up behind from Pont à Mousson.

On the German side it was clear from the start that the left wing of the French position touched the Mosel; but there was an absence of information as to the right wing of that position. Prince Frederick Charles was inclined to the belief that a part of the French army was retreating toward the Maas. During the slow advance movement of the IId Army toward the north highest headquarters believed it had ascertained with certainty that the French right wing was at Amanvillers, and the IId Army was ordered to execute a right turn for the purpose of attack. King William, present on the battlefield with the Ist Army, ordered the corps of the right wing—VIIth, VIIIth and IXth—to keep the French occupied in front; the left wing of the IId Army to envelop the French right wing. The Ist Army was not to attack in the front until the IId Army was ready for co-operation. But this in-

As according to these orders the XIIth Army Corps, advancing through Mars la Tour, was to take up the extreme left wing, while at that moment the Guard Corps was on its left in the vicinity of Hannonville, the Crown Prince and Headquarters of the Guard Corps called attention to a possibly resultant crossing in the march. In the belief, however, that the extreme left wing of the army would receive the task of operating independently,¹ Army Headquarters preferred to have the Guard Corps closed up and more in the center of the probable line of battle. Prince Frederick Charles probably also considered the place assigned the Guard Corps in the center of his army as too important to give to the Saxons who had not yet been tried in the field. He also considered that the disadvantages of a march crossing were sufficiently offset by directing the advance to be executed in closed masses. The orders issued were adhered to.

A lucky star brought it about that by this transposing of the two corps the Guard was called to extremely bloody and glorious achievements, but that Crown Prince Albert had the opportunity to bring about the main decision in the battle by his intrepid interference with the XIIth Corps on the extreme French right wing.

Everybody was astir in the earliest morning hour in the bivouacs. The coffee, drunk from the covers of the field kettles, tasted excellent. Whether caused by the premonition many hearts had of coming death, or by a something uncertain in the air, a peculiar, solemn earnestness pervaded the spirit of the troops, generally so joyous, full of life, and given to cracking jokes. But when the officers informed the men that the Saxons would today have a chance to battle with the enemy, when they called on everyone to show himself brave and uphold the traditional honor of the Saxon arms, all hearts beat with renewed fervor and willingness to perform the utmost.

tended enveloping movement of the supposed right wing turned into a frontal attack, as the IXth and VIIIth Corps did not remain in a waiting attitude, and as it was found that the French position extended to beyond Roncourt, far more to the north than had been supposed on the German side.

¹ According to the General Staff Account.

At 5.20 a.m. Crown Prince Albert issued orders to the 23d Division to start out its advance guard immediately and follow it half an hour later in assembly formation, one brigade (45th) on the right and one (46th) on the left of the Mars la Tour—Jarny road, battalions in column toward the center with one-quarter regulation platoon distance; the corps artillery in broad front behind the 46th Brigade; and the 24th Division to follow the latter in the same formation as the 23d, 47th Brigade on the right, 48th on the left. The difficulties in the march offered on both sides of Mars la Tour by the partly wooded ravines and the village itself prevented the massing of the troops until north of the village. This increased the duration of the crossing with the Guards coming from Hannonville and marching on Doncourt, without, however, influencing the later course of the battle, as a halt of several hours was made further on at Jarny. From and after 9 o'clock the road was free for the Guard Corps. The cavalry division received orders to draw up from Parfondrupt in an easterly direction toward Puxe, but to leave one regiment west of that village in continual observation of the roads from Etain and Briey.

The advance guard (1st Cavalry Regiment, Rifle Regiment, 2d Light Battery, 2nd Pioneer Company, Sanitary Detachment No. 1) of the XIIth Corps under Major General von Craushaar reached Jarny and thus the Metz—Verdun road at 8.30 a.m. As a message sent from the vicinity of Labry stated that it was believed that hostile infantry and artillery could be seen west of Valleroy and other infantry columns north of Doncourt, the 1st Rifle Battalion took up a position in and near Labry; the 3d occupied the convenient hill toward Doncourt and Moncel-Château; the 2d remained in reserve at Jarny, sending the 5th Company as left flank guard to Conflans. But no hostile attack took place. The reconnoitering detachments of the 1st Cavalry Regiment reported that they had encountered only hostile patrols at Moineville, Valleroy and Batilly, which quickly retired. Captain von Treitschke¹ had ridden ahead to Valleroy and encountered there only a hostile patrol which immediately

¹Leo von Treitschke; now (1901) General of Infantry and commanding general of the XIXth (IId Royal Saxon) Army Corps.

retired. He found the entire country as far as Briey free of the enemy.

As movements of troops above brigade strength encounter great difficulties in the terrain when operating in assembly formation many obstacles were encountered in the massed advance of the XIIth Corps as far as the Metz—Verdun road. The march led across the battlefield of the cavalry of both sides of August 16th. The troops soon encountered dead horses and troopers, here Prussians and there French. The number of dead soon increased and the columns often had to divide to pass around these obstacles. Large clumps of woods compelled breaking into sections, to resume the formation after passing. After 9 o'clock the 23^d Division reached Jarny, which was entirely empty of inhabitants. The 24th Division, which had started from Puxieux at about 7 o'clock, reached Moncel-Château after 10 a.m. The corps assembled by 11 o'clock and utilized the short time before noon for rest and eating breakfast.

Crown Prince Albert had executed the orders of army headquarters and reported to it the corps' arrival on the Metz—Etain road.

The 1st Cavalry Regiment reconnoitered in front of the XIIth Corps. One platoon of the 1st Squadron, under Lieutenant von Posern, encountered, at about 11 a.m., at Batilly, a body of hostile infantry and cavalry which retreated. Another platoon of that squadron encountered hostile patrols at Coinville. For the rest the vicinity appeared free of the enemy.

In Jarny the Crown Prince received copies of orders from army headquarters, which Prince Frederick Charles had issued to the IXth and Guard Corps.¹

Captain von Hodenberg of corps headquarters, on his return from the Guard Corps, reported that it had commenced its deployment at Doncourt at 10.25 a.m.

The Crown Prince consequently had to believe that not only the IXth but also the Guard Corps had resumed their advance. As a matter of fact, the 1st Guard Division started at that very moment. He therefore decided, in spite of the

¹See p. 58 *ante*.

fact that army orders bound him down to Jarny until the receipt of further orders, to also continue his march in the direction in which the enemy was reported to be. Because of the still existing uncertainty a formation more in depth was taken and at 11.30 a.m. the following orders were issued:

The advance guard will advance on both banks of the Orne on Valleroy and Moineville. The 23d Division will proceed with the 45th Brigade to Tichémont and occupy the Bois de Ponty. The 46th Brigade remains at Jarny at the disposition of the commanding general. The 24th Division will march through Moncel-Château, Jouaville and Batilly toward Ste. Marie aux Chênes. The corps artillery will proceed to Giraumont en Jarnisy.

The report to army headquarters which explains the thoughts of the Crown Prince best, reads:

Jarny, 18 August, 11.45 a.m. The enemy is said to be at Moineville and Ste. Marie aux Chênes. Therefore the XIIth Corps advances on those two points. I proceed to Fleury, later on to Jouaville.

That these measures were in consonance with the intentions of army headquarters, though taken prior to them, is shown by orders issued from there at 12 noon, as follows:

Orders for the XIIth Corps, issued at Vionville, 11.30 a.m. The XIIth Corps is directed to march on Ste. Marie aux Chênes; to secure by cavalry against Briey and Conflans and to send as much cavalry as possible ahead into the valley of the Mosel, to interrupt railroad and telegraph leading to Thionville. The VIIth, VIIIth, IXth and Guard Corps will, within two hours, attack the enemy who is in position on the heights from Leipzick to the Bois de Vaux, his rear toward Metz. The IIId, IIIId, Xth and XIIth Corps will follow in second line as support.¹

As the larger part of the corps had been started toward Ste. Marie aux Chênes, and as the uncertainty concerning the exact position of the enemy, so far found only in smaller detachments at and west of Ste. Marie, had not yet been removed, the Crown Prince adhered to the orders he had previously issued, merely drawing the 46th Brigade, which had been left at Jarny at his disposition, and the main body of the 12th Cavalry Division to behind the Bois de Ponty.

The cavalry division had started with its main body at 9 a.m. and had arrived at Puxe toward 11 a.m. Requisitions

¹In the General Staff Account, appendix p. 183, these orders are given wrong; correction is made in part 7.

had just been ordered when rising clouds of smoke in the east indicated a battle west of Metz. General Count zur Lippe left the 17th Uhlan Regiment back for observation against Verdun and, on his own responsibility, had already started the march to the battlefield when he was ordered to do so, at the same time being directed to reconnoiter toward Briey. The 18th Uhlan Regiment was charged with reconnoitering toward Briey and Etain.

Major General Krug von Nidda¹, who commanded the temporarily organized Uhlan brigade, held the main body of the brigade in readiness between Villers *sous* Pareid and Puxe during the day and from there had squadrons, sent far to the front, observe the three great roads from Metz to the Maas, recognizable at a distance because of the long rows of poplar trees which edged them. He also sent patrols toward Briey. The two heavy cavalry regiments were consolidated into a provisional brigade under Major General Senfft von Pilsach² and the horse battery attached to it. The brigade trotted via Conflans to the Bois de Ponty, arriving there at 2.45 p.m.

IX. Preliminary Arrangements for the Battle

In the XIIth Corps, resting not far from Jarny, the commands "To arms; Carry Arms; Right Shoulder Arms" were given and the movements ordered by the Crown Prince commenced.

It was shortly before noon when the first sounds of cannon fire were heard by the corps coming from Vernéville. The battle had begun with the IXth Corps. All tiredness and disgust with the long marching disappeared as if by magic. The nearby thunder of cannon increased the mental activity. Everyone saw and heard more distinctly. It seemed as if nerves and muscles received an increased power of tension; as if thoughts came doubly fast; as if the will could decide more energetically.

The dispositions of the Crown Prince led the corps nearly four miles farther forward and to the points where the

¹Died as Lieutenant General and Adjutant General in 1880.

²Hugo Senfft von Pilsach. Now (1901) General of Cavalry, active service, *à la suite* of the 2d Königinhussar Regiment No. 19.

enemy had shown himself. The main direction of the march, however, was toward Ste. Marie aux Chênes and only the advance guard remained along the Orne. Thus, toward 1 p.m., the XIIth Corps moved forward in the following formation and directions:

On the left flank, in the valley of the Orne, the former advance guard toward Valleroy and Moineville; in its right rear the advance guard of the 45th Brigade; followed by the 46th Brigade, from Jarny toward the Bois de Ponty. On the right wing the 24th Division toward Ste. Marie aux Chênes and behind it the corps artillery toward Giraumont.

In the advance guard the 2d Rifle Battalion marched through Labry and Hatrize, crossing the Orne there, thence through Beaumont to Moineville; the 3d Rifle Battalion through Labry to Valleroy. The 1st Rifle Battalion, which was accompanied by the 1st Light Battery, followed the 2d Rifle Battalion through Hatrize, but left one company at the bridge across the Orne at Hatrize. Here also the 2d Pioneer Company remained. Valleroy and Moineville were reached at 1.30 p.m. and found unoccupied.

In the 23d Infantry Division, the 45th Brigade marched with the 1st Light and 2d Heavy Batteries through Tichémont to behind the Bois de Ponty at Fleury. In accordance with the earlier tactics—utilizing villages as supporting and receiving points in an advance—this method was observed with the Bois de Ponty. The forest was impassable even to infantry on account of dense undergrowth and absence of roads.¹ The 2d Battalion Body Grenadier Regiment under Major von Brandenstein was designated to occupy the north-eastern edge of the forest. The companies distributed themselves equally along this edge, which they reached by going around the southeastern edge. These companies remained closed up.

The 46th Brigade marched with the 1st Heavy Battery Rothmaler through Giraumont to behind the northwest corner of the Bois de Ponty and took position there.

¹To take the shortest route to the regiment from the most advanced companies, Regimental Adjutant von Loeben took a footpath, which apparently led through the forest. The path ended and Loeben succeeded only after indescribable efforts in reaching the edge of the forest, his uniform torn and wet with perspiration.

The 24th Division attempted to reach its objective, Batilly, crossing on its way the Metz-Verdun railroad, then under construction. All during the march heavy thunder of cannon was heard and small, white clouds were seen appearing and disappearing on the horizon, caused by the bursting French shrapnels.¹ The infantry did its best to keep up with the cavalry with which Major von Tschirschky, glass and map in hand, rode across country.

After Crown Prince Albert had issued the necessary instructions at Jarny he proceeded to the ridge between Jouaville and Batilly (Hill 842). The thunder of cannon from the east became stronger and stronger and the almost continuous rattle of volleys and of the mitrailleuses indicated the increasing vehemence of the battle, which could be heard only and not seen on account of the intervening woods and folds in the terrain. But from the ascending powder smoke the position of the French batteries was perceived and it was evident that the line of batteries was constantly extending itself toward the north. Reports from the reconnoitering detachments of the 1st and 2d Cavalry Regiments, as well as those from the Guard Hussars, reconnoitering along the entire front of the XIIth Corps, indicated that the enemy was not only at Leipzick but even beyond St. Privat and also that Roncourt was occupied.

These reports were strongly confirmed by the verbal and very important report of Captain von der Planitz² of the general staff, who had reconnoitered the hostile position at 12.30 p.m. from the then still unoccupied Ste. Marie aux Chênes and who explained that a frontal attack on St. Privat la Montagne would be exceedingly difficult and bloody on account of the glacis-like formation of the hill on which the village, surrounded by walls, was situated, and on account of the total absence of cover afforded the attacker by the terrain.

The Crown Prince, studying the map, listened to Captain

¹The French shells and shrapnels were not provided with percussion fuses and only had time fuses, the maximum time period of which was 2800 m., thus causing them to explode in the air when the range fired at exceeded that limit.

²Paul Edler von der Planitz. Now (1901) General of Infantry and Minister of State and War.

von der Planitz without interjecting a word, and, when the latter had concluded, said: "In that case we shall not attack in front, but go arround the position," and made a corresponding movement with his left arm. This decision thus instantaneously arrived at was then carefully considered in regard to its execution, there being plenty of time for that. In the meantime reports arrived from the 23d Division stating that at least one hostile division stood at St. Privat and Roncourt, that no enemy was at Auboué and that therefore Prince George had started the troops nearest at hand¹ toward Ste. Marie. The advance guard reported that it had no enemy in its front on either side of the Orne and that Briey itself was unoccupied.

Prince George had stopped east of the Bois de Ponty when he learned of the reports sent to corps headquarters concerning the enemy (as given above) and immediately decided to advance in direction of Ste. Marie. General von Craushaar with the troops which up to then had formed the advance guard also proceeded, on his own initiative, to the battlefield, the location of which was indicated by the thunder of cannon.

Everything now strengthened the Crown Prince's intentions to envelop the French right wing. Toward 2 p.m. he ordered:

The 23d Division, which will again have the disposal of the 46th Brigade, will move through Coinville and the small wood east of Auboué against the position at Roncourt. The 24th Division will pass Batilly on the west, then advance in the hollow behind the small wood there and will attempt to press forward from there directly against Ste. Marie aux Chênes. The 48th Brigade remains behind the small wood at Batilly at the disposal of the commanding general.

As in every case, but this time in duplicate, the Crown Prince reported his measures to Prince Frederick Charles and also caused the Guard Corps to be informed thereof, a proof that he fully knew the importance of the step taken.

His report read, verbatim:

Sent from Batilly, 18 August; 2.30 p.m. The Saxon Army Corps advances with the 24th Infantry Division on Ste. Marie aux Chênes

¹1st and 3d Battalions, 100th Regiment; 1st and 2d Battalions, 101st Regiment.

and envelops with the 23d Division, through Coinville and the small woods situated between there and Roncourt, the French right wing.

This report reached army headquarters at about 3 p.m. These headquarters later on again called attention to the necessity of occupying the lower valley of the Mosel but otherwise issued no orders to the XIIth Corps on that day. This justified, during the battle, the assumption that the measures taken by the Crown Prince, both now and later on, were approved.

X. The Battlefield and the Enemy

The long ridge which denoted the main direction of the French front line makes, before descending on the north into the valley of the Orne, a further rise to a broad, comparatively high table on which the village of St. Privat is situated. From this point, which overtops and dominates the surrounding country, the plateau extends, gently sloping, in a southerly direction toward Amanvillers. From St. Privat there runs in a southwesterly direction a smaller ridge from which the hill to the south and west descends gradually into a long ravine which, running in a northwesterly direction from Habonville to St. Ail, turns from there sharply to the north and opens into the valley of the Orne at Auboué. This ravine, shallow at the start, further on deeply cut, with high, steep walls, opens out basin-like west of Ste. Marie. A second steep ravine runs parallel to it from Ste. Marie to the Orne at Hautmécourt. On the slope running from St. Privat and Roncourt to this ravine and which falls toward the west glacis-like, only a few more or less deep folds offer temporary protection. Toward the north the ridge continues, slightly descending, from St. Privat through Roncourt to Malancourt. Toward the east the entire plateau slopes gradually into the valley of the Mosel.

The French position between Roncourt and Amanvillers was of extraordinary strength. Everywhere room could be found for large bodies of troops which could deploy under cover and then cross the ridge with great rapidity. The weak point of the position was the right flank of the defensive line which had no natural protection. The attacker could find protection against the fire effect of the French guns

and chassepots, which could sweep the open field to the west for 3000 paces, only in the villages of St. Ail and Ste. Marie. West of these two villages the ravine mentioned provided a covered assembly place in front of the enemy. The ground, covered with wheat stubble and potato vines, was dry and hard.

Ste. Marie and St. Privat were both large villages, fairly well closed up and having massive buildings. Houses and gardens were surrounded by masonry walls. Many farms had stone walls. On the west and north side of St. Privat many stone walls, knee to breast high, running in irregular lines, formed protections for the field guns. The small woods between Auboué and Roncourt were impassable on account of dense undergrowth and fallen trees, limbs, etc.

The French 6th Corps of the Army of the Rhine occupied the position of St. Privat. Its commander was Marshal Canrobert, the hero of the Crimea, of Africa and Italy, a noble character, a brave general. Although superior in rank to Bazaine, he had placed himself without a word under the latter's orders when the Emperor gave him command of the French army, renouncing his rank to conduce to the best, and thereby proving his high-mindedness and patriotism. The 6th Corps, organized in the Camp of Châlons, had been sent to Nancy August 5th and called back again to Châlons on the 7th. On the 9th it had to proceed in all haste to Metz. Three of its divisions and one regiment of the fourth arrived there. Its cavalry division, reserve artillery, three infantry regiments, the engineer park and supply corps and officials did not get to that point because the railroad had been interrupted in the meantime at Dieulouard. Including two batteries attached to it from the general artillery reserve, the corps had only eleven batteries. It had no mitrailleuses. On August 16th the corps, numbering 31,032, had lost in killed and wounded 1 general, 201 officers and 5,458 men.¹ As it had no cavalry the newly organized division under General du Barail, consisting of the 2d Chasseurs d'Afrique (which had suffered greatly at Mars la Tour) and the three Chasseur regiments of the Brigade Bruchard of the 3d Corps, was attached to the corps on

¹F. Quesnoy.

August 17th. General de Lajaille then commanded the brigade composed of the two 2d Chasseur regiments. General Bruchard and the 3d and 10th Chasseurs reached St. Privat only in the afternoon of August 18th. One battery (6th of the 19th) was with the division; the other, the 5th, had been attached to the 3d Division of the 6th Corps.

On the evening of August 16th Marshal Bazaine made his headquarters in the inn of Gravelotte, where Napoleon had passed the previous night, and issued orders from there to his army to commence the retreat at 4 a.m., August 17th, into the position of Rozerieulles—Vernéville. He gave as the reason for this that the intended march westward could not be executed because of shortage of provisions and ammunition. The shortage of provisions should have had no weight since the march led through a rich country at a favorable season of the year, and as regards ammunition there were still 80,000 rounds for the artillery and 16 millions rounds small arms ammunition on hand—and the 16th of August had required but 26,000 rounds artillery and one and one-half million rounds of small arms ammunition. It was only necessary to have re-distributed the ammunition among the army corps, to equalize the amounts in each, since some had expended much more than others.

It can not be stated with any degree of certainty whether the errors committed by Bazaine in his leadership of the French army were due to the ambitions of an upstart or to the incompetence of the commander in the field. He had the chance to gain a victory on the 16th of August and to prevent a defeat on the 18th. Up to the beginning of the war the army was convinced of his cold-bloodedness, his ability, his remarkable memory and the skill with which he led troops, as though he foresaw everything and left nothing to chance.

On the morning of August 17th the French Army¹ stood

12d Corps, less Division La- veaucoupet and including the Brig- ade Lapasset of the 5th Corps.....	RIFLES	SABERS	GUNS & MITRAILLEUSES
.....	16,000	2,300	78
3d Corps.....	30,000	1,800	120
4th Corps.....	22,000	1,800	90
6th Corps.....	21,000	2,000	76
Guards.....	11,000	3,200	72
Cavalry reserve.....		1,800	12
Artillery reserve.....			72

with the 2d Corps at Gravelotte, the 6th and Guard Corps near Rezonville, the 3d Corps at St. Marcel and the 4th Corps in front of Doncourt. The corps marched to their new positions: the 2d at Point du Jour; the 3d at La Folie, Leipzick and Moscou; the 4th at Amanvillers; the Guard Corps in the ravine at Lessy between the forts of St. Quentin and Plappeville. The artillery reserve proceeded to the plateau at Plappeville and here the artillery of all army corps was to replenish its ammunition. Bazaine's headquarters was in Plappeville. The commander-in-chief and the reserves found themselves on the wing opposite from the most endangered side of the position.

Marshal Canrobert found the terrain assigned his corps unsuitable and requested Bazaine to allow him to place his corps (the 6th) in prolongation of the line of the other corps on the ridge of St. Privat, which request was approved by Bazaine. Hardly arrived in Vernéville, the 7th Corps had to resume its march to St. Privat and the last troops of the corps arrived there only at night, having several times crossed the line of march of the 3d and 4th Corps.

While the other corps reinforced their positions by hasty intrenchments and rifle trenches the 6th Corps was unable to do so on account of absence of time and of the engineer park. In addition, the troops sorely needed rest after their battle of August 16th.

During the night of August 17-18th the 6th Corps camped in some disorder and dispersed around St. Privat. There was no water. Thousands of bivouac fires lighted up the slope and the edges of the forest. The troops rested; a false alarm disturbed the Division Lafont de Villiers but for a short time. Reveille sounded early in the morning in the French camp, trumpets sounding and drums beating.

A total of approximately 100,000 rifles, 13,000 sabers, 520 guns, among them 66 mitrailleuses.

Of these there participated in the battle on August 18th: 84,000 rifles, 2,000 sabers, 398 guns, inclusive of 54 mitrailleuses. (Relative Strengths in the Franco-German War of 1870-71 to the fall of the Empire. — *Kriegsgeschichtliche Einzelschriften*, 1889, part 11).

The French battalions and squadrons had a smaller strength than those of the Germans. The complete battalions on the German side numbered 1000, on the French side 800 men; the German squadrons numbered 150, the French 125 horse.

A warm sun enlivened the soldiers' spirits. Breakfast was hastily eaten. It was impossible fully to replenish the ammunition expended on August 16th. All available wagons started for Metz to bring ammunition and provisions. When the battle opened they had not yet returned.

Small cavalry detachments, consisting of a commander and four troopers, were sent out from St. Privat in all directions at 7 a.m.; and observed German cavalry patrols at Montois, Auboué and St. Ail. Toward 9.30 a.m., the 2d *Chasseurs d'Afrique* proceeded to Montois la Montagne, the 2d *Chasseurs de France* to the road between Auboué and Ste. Marie. The latter observed the advance of the Saxons. On their march back to St. Privat these regiments cleaned the villages of the numerous marauders.

After 10 a.m., Marshal Canrobert received a report that strong hostile columns were marching along the Orne. He immediately forwarded this report to Bazaine and was shortly thereafter informed by the latter that the 2d and 3d Corps were also threatened by the enemy and that he should stand firm at St. Privat. At the same time he was informed that ammunition was on the way.

The 6th Corps had taken its position for battle by 1 p.m. Most of the troops still found time to cook. Of the 1st Division, Tixier, the Brigade Péchot was on one wing of the corps 500 to 600 meters southeast of Roncourt; the Brigade Le Roy de Dais on the other wing south of St. Privat, joining there the Division Cissey of the 4th Corps. The 2d Division, Bisson, composed of only the 9th Line Regiment, was in second line between St. Privat and Roncourt. The 3d Division, Lafont de Villiers, took position between Roncourt and St. Privat, the 4th Division, Levassor Sorval, south of St. Privat, and the cavalry division, du Barail, at the fork of the road northwest of Marengo-Auberge. The batteries were not kept together, but dispersed: 70 guns stood north and west, 10¹ south of St. Privat, 6 with the cavalry division.²

¹The 5th Battery, 8th Regiment, had only four guns; one had been lost on August 16th, one had been dismounted.

²The 6th Corps stood as follows:

Of the French division commanders, Tixier was a brave man with more solid than shining attributes; Lafont de Villiers and Levassor were handicapped by their age; Bisson and du Barail were able and efficient.¹

XI. Ste. Marie Aux Chênes

After the battle had opened Marshal Canrobert care-

1st Division, Tixier.

Brigade Péchot, 4th and 10th Line Regiments, deployed in two lines, southeast of Roncourt, one battalion in Roncourt with weak detachments sent ahead to Montois.

Brigade Le Roy de Dais, 12th and 100th Line Regiments, between St. Privat and Amanvillers in mass; in its front the right wing of the 4th Corps, in its rear the cavalry division of that corps.—The 9th Jäger Battalion occupied the south and southwest edge of St. Privat.

Of the batteries of the division, the 5th, 8th Regiment, was on the left wing pointed at the Bois de la Cusse; the 7th, 8th Regiment, south of Jérusalem, its rear against the main Metz—Briey road; the 8th, 8th Regiment, west of St. Privat on the right of that road; the 12th, 8th Regiment, in reserve north of St. Privat.

2d Division, Bisson.

9th Line Regiment in second line between St. Privat and Roncourt. In its front the 9th and 10th Batteries, 13th Regiment.

3d Division, Lafont de Villiers.

Brigade Colin, in first line; the 93d Line Regiment north of St. Privat; the 94th Line Regiment west of St. Privat. When the 94th Regiment started toward 1 p.m., to occupy Ste. Marie, the 93d Regiment extended itself as far as the St. Privat—Ste. Marie road and sent its skirmish lines to the slope about 1000 meters from the crest of the ridge.

Brigade Becquet de Sonnay, in second line; 75th and 91st Line Regiments in two lines, about 500 to 600 meters northeast of St. Privat.

The batteries of the division—5th, 6th and 7th, 14th Regiment and 5th, 19th Regiment (of the cavalry division) took position west of St. Privat opposite Ste. Marie aux Chênes.

4th Division, Levassor Sorval.

Brigade Gibon, 25th and 26th Line Regiments, in first line south of St. Privat, facing St. Ail, 600 meters left of the main road to Ste. Marie. Brigade Chanaleilles, 28th and 70th Line Regiments, in position behind Jérusalem as reserve.

The batteries of the division, 7th and 8th, 18th Regiment, took position in the gap between the Brigade Gibon and the main road to Ste. Marie aux Chênes.

Cavalry Division, du Barail.

Brigade de Lajaille, 2d Chasseurs d' Afrique, and 2d Chasseurs, in reserve at Marengo.

Brigade de Bruchard, 3d and 10th Chasseur, had not yet reached the corps. The 6th Battery, 19th Regiment.

All batteries had 4 pounders (86mm, 5), only the 9th and 10th, 13th Regiment had 12 pounders (121mm, 3).

There was an engineer company with each infantry division.

¹According to du Barail.

fully observed from St. Privat the movements of the German troops in front of the French 4th Corps. He informed Bazaine that a serious battle was imminent and that he would be compelled to husband his artillery fire on account of shortage of ammunition. The commander-in-chief sent reply that he would support him with the Grenadier Division and the artillery of the Guard.

Toward 1 p.m. Marshal Canrobert ordered the 94th Regiment to proceed from its position in front of St. Privat to Ste. Marie aux Chênes and occupy that village, in the apprehension that the opponent might utilize that place as a springboard against St. Privat and also in order to make an enveloping of his right wing more difficult. Colonel Geslin started with his regiment,¹ which had lost 24 officers and 540 men on August 16th, leaving three companies in St. Privat at the disposition of the chief of staff of the corps, General Henry. General Colin followed by his orderly officer who rode a captured 16th Uhlan Regiment horse, easily distinguished by its housings, accompanied the regiment. Both officers were wounded.

Ste. Marie, solidly built and in appearance more like a city than a village, is almost completely surrounded by walls. A few hundred paces in its front were at that time hedges and wire fences, as well as other obstacles, used by farmers in time of peace. Near the center of the village, on an open spot, stood the church. It was too late for the French to increase the already strong defenses of the place, and even the entrances were not barricaded. Of the 94th Regiment, the 3d Battalion occupied the part of the village toward Auboué; the 2d Battalion the opposite part; three companies of the 1st Battalion were in the village as reserve. While the regiment occupied the walls, hedges and fences in front of the villages, a battery (6th, 14th Regiment) went into position a few hundred paces east of the village, to support the defense.

Crown Prince Albert caused the 24th Division to advance in the direction ordered by army headquarters on Ste. Marie,

¹On August 17th it numbered 41 officers, 1430 men. On the national monument at Mars la Tour, Geslin and the 94th Regiment are representing the French foot soldiers.

in order, by the capture of that village, to gain a supporting point for the enveloping movement to be made by the 23d Division. Prince George immediately after receiving orders for that enveloping movement took the necessary measures to concentrate his troops south of Auboué.¹ The advance guard, marching from Moineville to Ste. Marie, received orders to change direction via Coinville to Auboué, and only smaller parts of that advance guard became involved in the battle around Ste. Marie.

The orders of corps headquarters to attack Ste. Marie reached the 24th Division at 2.15 p.m., when the 47th Brigade, marching in the lead, was east of Batilly. The brigade then turned into the ravine west of Ste. Marie and took position on both sides of the road leading from Ste. Marie to the north corner of the Bois de Ponty, while the 48th Brigade remained at Batilly at the disposition of the Crown Prince. Shortly before 3 p.m. General von Nehrhoff ordered his artillery into position against Ste. Marie and the two heavy batteries, Keysselitz and Groh, took up a position northwest of St. Ail, immediately at the eastern edge of the ravine, the 4th Light Battery, von der Pforte, taking position farther to the right alongside the left wing of the advance guard of the Guard Corps. The 3d light Battery, Bucher II, was for the present kept in the ravine but later on took position also to the left of Ste. Marie.

The Guard Corps had advanced on the right of the XIIth Corps. After 1 p.m. nine batteries of the Guard Corps deployed between St. Ail and Habonville and fought, facing

¹At the time the 47th Brigade formed for attack on Ste. Marie in the meadow bottom of the ravine west of that place the 45th Brigade marched from the south side of the Bois de Ponty, leaving Batilly on the west, and passed behind the former brigade. (Report from Lieutenant General von Loeben, at that time adjutant of the Body Grenadier Regiment.)

Toward 4.30 p.m. the 46th Brigade arrived south of Moineville while the 47th Brigade was still fighting in front of Ste. Marie. Prince George had directed it toward Coinville, but, through an error in transcribing the orders, Moineville had been designated as march objective. The brigade commander could see from a hill near Moineville that a hot battle raged the other side of Ste. Marie, and therefore sent his adjutant, Von Schultes, to ask if he should move up closer. During that time Captain von der Planitz, of the general staff, who had sought the brigade in vain at Coinville, arrived and brought orders from the Crown Prince for the further advance through Coinville. (Memoirs of General of Infantry von Montbé.)

northeast, the French artillery south of St. Privat. Detachments of the 1st Guard Division occupied Habonville and St. Ail. As the division commander, General von Pape, soon perceived that Ste. Marie had to be taken before an attack on the hostile main position could even be thought of, he ordered his advance guard to deploy in front of that place without, however, proceeding to the immediate attack. Toward 3 p.m. Ste. Marie was almost surrounded on the south and southwest side by the Fusilier Battalion of the 4th Guard Regiment, the Guard Jäger Battalion and the 2d and 3d Battalions of the Guard Fusilier Regiment; but the quality of its defensive works appeared to make it advisable to prepare the attack by artillery fire. On the request of General von Pape ten guns (4th light and two platoons of the 2d Horse Batteries) debouched from the artillery line of the Guard batteries to the north, advanced on Ste. Marie and directed their fire on the village in conjunction with the batteries of the 24th Division just then going into position west of that village.

The Saxon and Prussian batteries opened fire on Ste. Marie at 1,300 to 1,800 paces range, which appeared to be very effective. In the mean time the Saxon corps artillery, which had followed the 24th Division, also arrived, and with its seven batteries took position along the road leading from Batilly across the hill west of the ravine to Auboué. It distributed its fire partly against Ste. Marie and partly on the open field in the direction of St. Privat and Roncourt, where infantry and artillery of the enemy could be seen.

The three batteries of the 23d Division also came up. The 1st Light Battery, Lengnick, had gone into position on the hill west of the ravine at 2.30 p.m., but had left that position to make room for the corps artillery. It now crossed the ravine and took a new position on the left of the heavy batteries of the 24th Division, where a hedge in front offered protection against rifle fire from Ste. Marie. North of the corps artillery, about 1,500 paces distant from it, the 2d Heavy Battery, Leonhardi, and the 2d Light Battery, Westmann, went into action, the latter battery having hastened from the advance guard toward the sound of cannons.

The cavalry of the two German divisions which had met each other here, the Guard Hussars and the 2d Cavalry Regiment, stood in readiness at the small woods northeast of Batilly; the 1st Cavalry Regiment, of the advance guard of the 23d Division, under Colonel von Sahr, halted behind the left wing of the Saxon artillery.

Generals von Pape and von Nehrhoff in the meantime discussed the necessary measures for a combined and simultaneous attack on Ste. Marie, which the 1st Guard Division was to make from the south and southwest and the Saxons from the west and northwest. On the Saxon side the seven battalions of the 47th Brigade were designated for the attack. Colonel von Leonhardi¹ had formed them in the following manner: the 12th Jäger Battalion in the advanced line deployed in column of companies; it was followed by the 104th Regiment on the right, the 105th Regiment on the left wing, the latter two regiments formed in three lines; in the first line the 1st Battalions in column of companies, in the second line the two 2d Battalions, half battalions close together in the center and with wing companies out, in the third line the two 3rd Battalions in column toward the center.

After the combined artillery fire appeared to have been sufficiently effective Generals von Pape and von Nehrhoff gave orders for the attack on Ste. Marie and the troops designated therefor started—those of the Guard Corps and the 47th Brigade almost simultaneously shortly after 3 p.m. The 3d Battalion of the Rifle Regiment advanced independently on the north edge of the village.²

As soon as the 12th Jäger Battalion, led by Major Count Holtzendorff, left the ravine and appeared on the slope of the small hill in front, the hostile fire opened on it from Ste. Marie. There was absolutely no cover from the entirely

¹Now (1901) Lieutenant General, active list.

²The Guard Fusiliers advanced from the south, their 2d Battalion taking direction on the south edge of the village, while on the right the 10th and 11th Companies turned against the southeast corner and the eastern exit; on the left the 9th and 12th Companies in conjunction with the Guard Jägers and the Fusiliers of the 4th Guard Regiment advanced against the west side. The two Grenadier battalions of this regiment and the 1st Battalion of the Guard Fusilier Regiment, which had just arrived from Habonville, followed the attackers as immediate reserve.

concealed enemy and it was necessary now to charge as rapidly as possible and without stopping. At the run, led by dense skirmish lines followed by small supports consisting of half platoons, on the right in connection with the Guard Fusiliers, the brave Jägers, undismayed by the rain of bullets which the enemy poured upon them, charged against the west front of Ste. Marie. No shot was fired by them; their strength almost gave out; but passion and the desire for battle tightened every muscle and, with thundering hurrahs, the skirmish lines entered the surrounding walls. Here Captain von Dieskau fell, mortally wounded, at the head of his company. The enemy awaited the final contact only at a few points on the outskirts and interior of the village, but here also was soon overcome. All companies of the battalion, heedless of a few small detachments of the enemy left in the rear, pressed forward without stopping through any available gap between houses and gardens after the soon completely routed enemy. Almost simultaneously parts of all companies left the village in single groups; the opposite edge of the village had been reached; the red trousers disappeared behind the adjacent hill and now the command was "Forward" up the hill; and then "Lie down; rapid fire," for all of a sudden a hail of chassepot bullets rained around the ears of the pursuing Jägers. Many a hostile bullet found its target there and the battalion suffered much greater loss here than it did in storming the village. The fleeing enemy had been received by fresh troops and the pursuit stopped. Parts of the battalion occupied the walls of the village; skirmishers lay opposite the French infantry on a line the right end of which stretched to within about 200 paces in front of the eastern exit of St. Privat, its left end at the fork on the road where the road to the woods on the north leaves the Ste. Marie—Montois road.

The infantry regiments of the 47th Brigade had followed the Jäger battalion at short distance along the Bois de Ponty—Ste. Marie road. Covered in the meadow ground, they had had only a few losses by chance shells striking there, but after they had crossed the defile and when they found themselves on the level slope commanded on the east

by the houses of the village, they received a hot fire. The great heat, long marches with but insufficient night rest, together with short rations—it had been impossible to cook on August 18th—weakened the staying powers of the troops; but the valor and sense of duty which imbued them drove physical discomfort into the background and only a very few men succumbed to exhaustion. With drums beating, company and platoon commanders in the lead, in good order and perfect alignment, without firing a shot, the brigade advanced, marking its trail with dead and wounded.

The two leading lines of the brigade participated directly in the storming of Ste. Marie.

Of the 104th Regiment, on the right wing, the 1st Battalion under Major Allmer II charged directly against the church in the village and surrounded it, one of its companies turning toward the exit leading to Montois. The 2d Battalion under Major Bartcky stormed the northwest part of the village, suffering serious loss.¹ When the color bearer, Sergeant Böhm, fell mortally wounded, the battalion adjutant, 1st Lieutenant von Egidy, grasped the colors and carried them held high in front of the 7th Company until within Ste. Marie aux Chênes.

Of the 105th Regiment, on the left wing, the 1st Battalion under Major von Kessinger, charged immediately south of the Bois de Ponty—Ste. Marie road and through the village to the other side. The 2d Battalion under Major von Tettenborn attacked the walls of the village north of the west entrance. Captain Scheffel charged the west entrance with his company and fell there mortally wounded.

Toward 3.30 p.m. Ste. Marie was in the possession of the Germans. The garrison, which retreated in good order first into the ravine running in front of the village to the north, later on in the direction of Roncourt, left a few hundred prisoners in the hands of the Germans, amongst them a number of marauders of different regiments.²

Opposite the batteries of the Guard and the 12th Corps

¹Captain von Metzsch was seriously wounded.

²There were many marauders in that vicinity and thus it happened that many prisoners were taken from troops which did not participate at all in this battle.

the artillery of the 6th Corps participated in the battle mainly from positions south and north of the main road in front of St. Privat.¹

After Ste. Marie had been captured, the troops, which had entered from all sides, occupied the edges of the village facing the enemy.² Parts of the 47th Brigade pursued the retreating French to the glacis of St. Privat and here heavy, costly battles ensued in the course of the next few hours.

Marshall Canrobert had taken excellent measures for receiving his 94th Regiment. The 93d Regiment, west of St. Privat, had advanced its skirmish lines on a large arc, the right end of which rested along the road connecting the Ste. Marie—Montois and the St. Privat—Roncourt roads, and the left end in front of St. Privat. From the Brigade Becquet de Sonnay, which stood in the second line in the main position northeast of St. Privat, the 75th Regiment proceeded to the right wing, the 91st Regiment to the left wing of the 93d Regiment. The 75th Regiment left the 1st Battalion in front of Roncourt, facing the woods, and proceeded with the 2d and 3d Battalions along the Montois—Ste. Marie road to the small rise, Hill 827, and sent skirmish lines beyond that. The 2d and 3d Battalions of the 91st

¹Of the four batteries of the Division Tixier, the 5th, 7th and 12th, 6th Regiment, stood at St. Privat south of the road, the 8th, of the same regiment, north of the road. The batteries of the division Lafond de Villiers, 5th, 6th and 7th, 14th Regiment and 5th, 19th Regiment, had been advanced from St. Privat north of the great road toward Ste. Marie. The batteries of the Division Levassor Sorval—7th, 8th, 18th Regiment, were between the great road and the right wing of their division. The 9th and 10th Batteries, 13th Regiment, had gone into position, by orders of Marshal Canrobert, as left wing batteries of the corps southwest Ferme Jérusalem; later the 9th Battery was sent to the 9th Line Regiment on the right wing at Roncourt. The 6th Battery, 19th Regiment, remained with the cavalry division.

Canrobert, whose headquarters were in St. Privat, ordered the 5th Battery, 19th Regiment—when it no longer could hold its position against Ste. Marie—into a position with two pieces in a garden on the northern edge of St. Privat and with four pieces close to St. Privat behind the embankment of the main road.

²Of the Guards the company of the Guard Jägers were at the eastern edge of the village with small detachments outside of it; with them were the 2d and 3d Battalions of the Guard Fusiliers; farther in the rear on the south side of the village was the 1st Battalion of that regiment, and the 4th Guard Regiment was in the village roads, closed up.

Regiment executed an attack on and north of the main St. Privat—Ste. Marie road.

The German troops which had gone to beyond Ste. Marie were helpless with their needle guns against the superior chassepots. The small meadow ground, situated northeast of Ste. Marie, was the only place which offered some sort of protection against the direct fire of the enemy standing in front of St. Privat.

Captain von Winckler of the 12th Jäger Battalion made an attempt with the 2d Company to advance from the eastern exit of the village a short distance along the main road in order to get a better fire on the enemy which had come to within 600 paces, but had to give up the attempt and be satisfied with holding the advanced garden walls and ditches.

Two companies (6th and 7th) of the 2d Battalion, 104th Regiment, started from the village for St. Privat. They received such hot fire and suffered such loss that a further advance was not to be thought of. In this charge 1st Lieutenant von Egidy, who had carried the colors far forward, was severely wounded.

Captains Panse and von Büнау of the 105th Regiment gained a firm foothold with parts of their companies (4th and 5th) in the small meadow ground northeast of the village; the other companies of the 2d Battalion entered the fight on their right. Here also the terrain offered no cover against the enemy's volleys and heavy losses were inevitable. The inspiring words of the officers raised the men's courage and strengthened their endurance. The regimental commander, Colonel von Tettau,¹ gave a shining example in this stationary, costly defensive fight, as well as in the previous charge, by his display of courage and coolness. He rode along his lines as he would have done on the drill ground, here encouraging, there ordering. A piece of shell tore off his right shoulder strap, another one killed his horse from under him, but a few minutes later the colonel was again mounted on a fresh horse in front of his fighting detachments.

¹Died in 1898 as Lieutenant General, active service.

The brigade commander, Colonel von Leonhardi, continually encouraged all those detachments whose zealousness had led them to beyond Ste. Marie to press still further ahead and with impetuous bravery also decided to bring into action the two 3d Battalions of the 104th and 105th Regiments which had arrived as reserve on the west side of the village. The 3d Battalion, 104th Regiment, went around the north of Ste. Marie, reinforced the Saxon right wing in front of the village along the main road and for the largest part here deployed in skirmish lines. At the very commencement of the fight here the battalion commander, Major Zillich, was wounded and the battalion could hold its position there only under the greatest difficulty.¹

Brigade adjutant, Lieutenant Wagner, had brought orders to the 3d Battalion, 105th Regiment, to deploy on the left wing north of Ste. Marie, facing Roncourt. Here the situation of the battalion became very precarious, as it received an enfilade fire from the north and could beat off the hostile attack only with the greatest difficulty. Its ranks were thinning visibly.² The battalion commander, Major Günther was seriously wounded on the head by a piece of shell. The 3d Rifle Battalion brought help.

After General von Craushaar had given the advance guard direction on Ste. Marie, the Rifle Regiment had

¹Lieutenant von Schönberg, battalion adjutant, Second Lieutenant Burckhardt and acting first sergeant Dörfel were killed. Lieutenant Köring, Second Lieutenant and regimental adjutant Pohle, and Second Lieutenant Flechsig were seriously wounded. Second Lieutenant Freiherr von Münchhausen and Second Lieutenant of reserve Heynig were slightly wounded.

A shining example of self-sacrifice was Private Siegel of the 9th Company when Lieutenant Köring was seriously wounded. The latter had declined all proffered aid of his men, so as not to draw any men from the firing line. Only after that company had fallen back into the village of Ste. Marie would he permit a soldier to accompany him to the dressing station. Private Siegel hastened up in spite of the murderous fire and led Lieutenant Köring back. The French fire became heavier and hotter and Köring received a second wound in the arm. Then Siegel said: "Lieutenant, I will get behind you, else you surely will be hit again; you have enough wounds now." Just as he stepped behind the lieutenant a third projectile, passing close to Siegel, struck Köring in the thigh, so that the latter said in reply to Siegel's remark: "It is not necessary for you to do so, I am struck again already."

²At the first advance, battalion adjutant Lieutenant Menz was mortally wounded; a chassepot bullet shattered Captain von Rouvroy's hand; Lieutenants Blohm and Philipp were mortally wounded.

started with the 2d Light Battery from Moineville and Valley toward that place, the 2d Battalion on the right, the 3d on the left, the 1st in reserve. The two battalions of the first line crossed the ravine running to Auboué and advanced along both sides of the main Auboué—Ste. Marie road, forming for attack, the 2d Battalion opening fire on the village. At this moment Colonel von Hausen¹ received information from a Guard Hussar officer that Ste. Marie had been taken by Prussian Jägers. It soon transpired, however, that the village was still held by the enemy, for the regimental adjutant von Minckwitz, who had ridden ahead toward the village, received from there a wound from which he later died;² but as almost immediately after word arrived that Ste. Marie was being taken by other troops, and that the Rifle Regiment should proceed in the ravine toward Coinville and from there to Auboué, the battalions were ordered to stop the attack and turn to the left. Captain von Mangoldt, however, had already become seriously engaged with the 11th company and Major Allmer, commanding the 3d Battalion, believed that he was justified in not obeying the order for the retreat. The 11th Company entered, under quite a heavy loss, the northwest corner of the village simultaneously with the 47th Brigade.³

After Ste. Marie had been captured the 3d Battalion turned toward the north to rejoin the Rifle Regiment. It interfered successfully en route in the battle, between the left wing of the 47th Brigade and the French 75th Regiment, which had ensued the other side of the ravine running toward Hautmécourt, and relieved the sorely pressed 3d Battalion, 105th Regiment. Major Allmer I, one of the bravest, who had been wounded in the breast in 1849, was here mortally wounded.⁴ Captain von Lossow led the battalion to the woods situated directly north, chasing off some

¹Died in 1887 as Lieutenant General, active service, *à la suite* Rifle (Fusilier) Regiment Prince George No. 108.

²*Attention, monsieur*, was shouted to the officer from immediately in front of the village as he galloped up and at the same time he received a wound in the heel.

³Lance Corporal Bergmann and Private Möbins were the first to enter the village.

⁴Captain Jahn and Lieutenant Jungblut were seriously wounded.

few French tirailleurs hidden in some folds of the terrain.

The attack movements of the German Infantry against Ste. Marie had caused the Saxon batteries to be completely masked in their positions on both sides of the bottom west of Ste. Marie and hindered in their fire. As soon as the village had been stormed, the batteries of the corps artillery crossed the ravine in their front by echelons from the right. While the 4th Battalion under Lieutenant Colonel Oertel was for the present kept in reserve, Colonel Funke advanced with the 3d Battalion into a new position north of Ste. Marie. The 6th Heavy Battery, Verworner, went into position nearest the village on the main road leading to Auboué. At some distance from it the two other batteries took up a more advanced position: the 5th Light, von Zeschau, about 500 paces east of the road; on its left, the 5th Heavy, Hamner, about 800 paces east of the road. In the meantime the infantry fight ensued between the left wing of the 47th Brigade and the French 75th Regiment, as well as reassembled parts of the 94th Line Regiment, and the two batteries were soon hotly fired on by French skirmishers hidden in the bushes and folds of the terrain close in front. The battalion commander, Major Hoch, was wounded and a large number of men and horses disabled.¹ The two batteries then took a new position west of the road from Ste. Marie to Auboué in prolongation of the 6th Heavy Battery, but some distance away from it.

Shortly after 4 p.m. two batteries of the 24th Division, which up to then had stood southwest of Ste. Marie, arrived on this part of the battlefield. They took position alongside of the 6th Heavy Battery, the 3d Light on the left, the 4th Heavy on the right. In this position, the right wing of which almost touched the village, the 3d Heavy Battery also went into action a short time later. These six batteries combined their fire mainly against repeated attacks of the French infantry, causing it to fall back each time. They also took up the battle with French batteries west of St. Privat, in position north of the main road. The 4th Light Battery, which had taken up connection with the Guards on the extreme right wing of the 24th Division, had, by order of

¹Captain Hamner was seriously wounded.

the battalion commander, Major Richter, gone into position southeast of the village after Ste. Marie had been captured and from there fired on the enemy's lines at St. Privat and Roncourt.

The three batteries of the 23d Division, which had participated in the first two stages of the battle around Ste. Marie, had followed their division to Auboué without distance.

The two German division commanders had ridden immediately behind the first detachments into Ste Marie aux Chênes. Difficult situations were encountered within the village; the Saxons and Prussians, who had charged shoulder to shoulder, were crowded together in the narrow village streets. The stone houses stood close together and on the side toward the enemy had neither doors nor windows so that the men could find cover only by crowding through narrow gaps between houses to behind the low stone walls. The strong fire coming from St. Privat made staying in the village and near the village extremely precarious, but the men showed wonderful nerve. The continuous thunder of cannon, the rattle of rifles and the peculiar, rasping sound of the mitrailleuses from the French 4th Corps shook the ground. In front of the village the bullets whistled sharply; high in the air burst shells, the pieces of which traveled with a horrible noise through the air, striking the roofs and houses. In General von Nehrhoff's staff Adjutant Friedrich of the artillery was shot through the arm, an orderly through the leg, the horse of Adjutant von Carlowitz¹ through a leg.

Major General von Nehrhoff carefully watched the battle which had ensued in front of the village, and which at the start appeared to be merely a matter of driving the enemy from the vicinity of the captured place. But the general soon perceived that the fight was taking on larger and larger proportions, not in accord with what he knew to be the intentions of the Crown Prince, and that the enemy's strength and the unfavorable terrain gave little hope of success. He therefore sent orders to Colonel von Elterlein, who had taken over the command of the 47th Brigade after Colonel von Leonhardi had been wounded, to break off the

¹ Now (1901) Lieutenant General, active service.

fight and assemble the brigade at Ste. Marie. Captain von Hodenberg just then arrived and brought orders to the same effect from the Crown Prince to General von Nehrhoff directing him to confine himself to the holding of Ste. Marie.

The 47th Brigade was assembled at the northwest corner of Ste. Marie, the assembly being finished by 5 p.m. The advance troops, hotly engaged in battle and fighting in disorder, were drawn back, the first battalions of the 104th and 105th Regiments, which had remained in the village, were relieved by detachments of the 1st Guard Division, and drawn off. As the 12th Jäger Battalion assembled on the village street, General von Pape greeted it and Guards and Jägers cheered loudly.

XII. Roncourt

Halted on the hill west of Ste. Marie, near the batteries of the corps artillery, Crown Prince Albert had viewed the charge on Ste. Marie unfolding itself like a panorama before his eyes and rejoiced over the hurrahs with which his charging battalions achieved their first success in this campaign. From here he sent orders to General von Nehrhoff not to advance farther but to confine himself to holding Ste. Marie. The Crown Prince viewed the battlefield in the direction of Roncourt and Montois la Montagne and observed the attitude of the enemy with great attention. Roncourt as well as St. Privat were occupied. Troops were pushed ahead from both places. French infantry several times approached close to Ste. Marie, behind it a long line of numerous guns in action, appearing to extend way beyond Roncourt on the north. This gave the Crown Prince the impression that the movement ordered for the 23d Division from Auboué through the woods—a straight line on Roncourt—might still lead against the front of the enemy. Under these conditions he sent, toward 4 p.m., Adjutant Müller von Berneck to Prince George with directions to debouch farther to the north with his troops, in order to effect the intended envelopment. To give this movement more strength and support, the 48th Brigade at Batilly was at once started for Auboué to report to Prince George for orders. The Saxon cavalry division, which reached the

Bois de Ponty toward 3 p.m. and which in accordance with orders had halted in reserve until 4 p.m. at the northwest edge of the woods, opposite Ste. Marie aux Chênes, and later on had started from there toward Coinville, received orders to join the enveloping movement at Auboué and to make an attempt to gain the enemy's rear by going around his extreme right wing. Two squadrons were to be sent at the same time into the valley of the Mosel to destroy railroad and telegraph in the vicinity of Maizières.¹

The first orders, to assemble the 23d Division at Coinville to advance on Roncourt, had reached Prince George at 2.45 p.m. on the heights north of the Batilly woods. The Prince who from his position could see that not only troops of the 24th Division but also of the Guards were opposite Ste. Marie, had already considered it best to seek employment for his troops farther to the north. The advance guard and the 45th Brigade, therefore, were directed toward Coinville, the 46th Brigade, behind the north corner of the Bois de Ponty, received directions to proceed to Moineville.² As a place of assembly for the former the ravine at Auboué leading to the Orne valley was first utilized, later, after Ste. Marie had been taken, a depression in the terrain, wider and about 1000 paces east of the Metz—Briey road, where French shells³ greeted the division. Stray chassepot bullets also fell amongst the division staff, one horse being killed. General von Craushaar again resumed command of the three regiments of his 45th Brigade.

The 1st and 2d Battalions of the Rifle Regiment had just arrived at Auboué when Prince George received directions from the Crown Prince immediately to occupy the woods between Auboué and Roncourt, the Crown Prince having observed from his location that the enemy (1st Battalion, 9th Regiment) was advancing toward those woods. Prince George personally ordered the 1st Battalion under Major Freiherr von Lindeman to proceed to the woods at double

¹These were the last orders issued by army headquarters to the Crown Prince. (See p. 70 *ante*.)

²See note, page 174 *ante*.

³From the 7th and 8th Batteries, 18th Regiment.

time. The 2d Battalion under Major von Dziembowsky¹ followed in support a little to the left. The woods between Auboué and Roncourt, traversed by a deep, steep-sided ravine opening near the Orne, were filled with dense underbrush and could be passed through only with difficulty. In some parts of the woods a detour was necessary. The two rifle battalions found the part of the woods west of the ravine unoccupied, but encountered French tirailleurs on the other side of the ravine. The 3d and 4th Companies suffered some losses by shrapnel fire.²

At 4.30 p.m., when the 3d Battalion had arrived from its battlefield at Ste. Marie and was partly in and partly behind the woods, Colonel von Hausen ordered an attack on the last clump of woods which the enemy still held and which was now taken at the first charge. On the left wing of the 45th Brigade the rifle regiment occupied after 5 p.m. the nearest part of the hill in front and from there directed its fire against the hostile infantry (1st Battalion, 9th and 1st Battalion, 91st Regiment), which was in the open west of Roncourt.

General von Craushaar directed the Body Grenadier Regiment of the Grenadier Brigade assembled at the west edge of the woods, to follow the rifle regiment into the woods. With the 1st and 3d Battalions in the first line, each followed by a half battalion of the 2d Battalion as second line, the regiment proceeded partly through the right wing of the Rifle Regiment and getting mixed with it and partly turning to the right into the open field, in the direction of Roncourt. Further on the regiment encountered resistance. While the 1st Company carried on a fire fight with a detachment of the enemy (1st Battalion, 75th Regiment) lying in a depression behind a thorn hedge, the 10th and 12th Companies³, on the left wing of the regiment, drove the enemy from the nearest depression in front. The 2d Grenadier Regiment followed the Rifle and Body Guard Regiments at a

¹Now (1901) Lieutenant General, active service.

²From the 9th Battery, 13th Regiment, which had been attached to the 9th Line Regiment, and the 6th Battery, 19th Regiment, of the cavalry division.

³Sergeant Böhme of the 12th Company, in spite of a severe wound in the head, remained on the spot, encouraging his men.

longer distance, but had advanced its 1st Battalion by orders of General von Craushaar to beyond the woods toward Montois. On account of the distance this regiment fired but few shots. All three regiments received orders to stop their advance until the enveloping of the French right wing through Montois, ordered by Prince George in the meantime, could become effective.

The most advanced detachments of the enemy had been driven from the woods, but were received by strong skirmish lines which had gained a firm foothold between the woods and Roncourt and which kept up a hot fire on the east edge of the woods. On the right was the 1st Battalion, 9th Regiment, then the 1st Battalion, 91st Regiment, and on the left the 1st Battalion, 75th Regiment.

In the start General Bisson had only the 1st Battalion, 75th Line Regiment, the 9th Line Regiment, and the 9th Battery, 13th Regiment, at his disposal on the extreme French right wing. On Canrobert's personal orders when the regiment advanced on Ste. Marie the 1st Battalion, 75th Regiment, had been kept back opposite the woods between Auboué and Roncourt. With the battery assigned to it, the 9th Line Regiment held its position between Roncourt and St. Privat until after 4 p.m. suffering from fire of the German batteries which finally silenced it.

When General Bisson perceived with certainty the preliminary movements of the Saxons for an envelopment he sent a report to Canrobert that it was absolutely necessary to occupy Roncourt at once. The marshal was of the same opinion and sent him the Brigade Péchot, then northeast of Roncourt. In the meantime Bisson had sent the 1st Battalion, 9th Regiment, to the front of Roncourt and toward Montois, except one company, which occupied Roncourt and prepared it for defense. The 2d Battalion, 9th Regiment, remained in reserve on the ridge south of Roncourt. The 3d Battalion, 9th Regiment, had been ordered to St. Privat, to occupy the north edge of the village. Of the Brigade Péchot, which soon arrived under the fire of the Saxon batteries, only the 10th Line Regiment was kept at the general's disposition; the 4th was

called to St. Privat to be utilized against the first charge made by the 1st Guard Division on that village. The 10th Line Regiment took position in folds of the terrain and behind stone walls, some distance in front of St. Privat and facing Roncourt. The regiments of the Brigade Becquet de Sonnay, which had been drawn out of the fight with the 47th Brigade at Ste. Marie, took station between the 9th and 10th Regiments, the 91st on the right, the 75th on the left. Thus the front from Roncourt to St. Privat was occupied from right to left by the 9th (1st and 2d Battalions), 91st, 75th, 10th Line Regiments. The 1st Battalions of the 9th, 91st and 75th Regiments were sent ahead toward the woods. The 94th Regiment had used up all of its ammunition and fell back through Roncourt to the quarries of Jau-mont, where it succeeded in replenishing.

The visible progress of the 45th Brigade in the direction of Roncourt permitted a renewed advance of the Saxon batteries. Crown Prince Albert, considering it necessary for the preparation of the subsequent infantry attack on the enemy's main position, ordered Major General Köhler to take all available artillery to beyond the main road leading from Ste. Marie to Auboué.

In pursuance thereof the general called up the 4th Battalion, until then held in readiness, and at 4.30 p.m. took a position with the seven batteries of the corps artillery on the road from Ste. Marie to Hautmécourt, in which the 3d Battalion in the start formed the right wing about 400 paces north of Ste. Marie. This wing was prolonged later on by the four batteries of the 24th Division, which arrived one after the other on the new artillery front, while on the left wing the 2d Heavy Battery of the 23d Division went into position at the south edge of the woods. Thus, before 6 p.m., twelve Saxon batteries were in action between Ste. Marie and the woods.¹

The 2d Heavy Battery, Leonhardi, had just gone into position at the south edge of the woods when a forward move-

¹From left to right:

(23d Division	4th Battalion	3d Battalion	2d Battalion	24th Division)
2d Heavy	8th, 7th Hea- vy, 6th Light, 2d Horse	5th Light, 5th & 6th Heavy	3d Heavy, 3d Light, 4th Heavy	4th Light

ment of hostile cavalry from Roncourt was perceived and the battery took that cavalry as target. At the same time Captain Müller, with the 2d Horse Battery, galloped across the field in front towards the enemy and fired several rounds at him with apparent good effect. He was supported by the 6th Light Battery, Fellmer, which had followed him and gone into position on his left. After that enemy had disappeared, the batteries, being joined on the right by Captain von Zeschau with the 5th Light Battery, directed their fire on the hostile position between Roncourt and St. Privat. The hostile cavalry was part of General du Barail's division, which had been deployed on the right wing of the 6th Corps¹ until 6 o'clock and then made an unsuccessful charge against the left wing of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade.

The appearance of the French cavalry had also been observed by the Crown Prince and, in consequence, the 2d Cavalry Regiment, belonging to the 24th Division and in readiness southwest of Ste. Marie, had received orders to pass around the woods between Auboué and Roncourt in order to drive off any cavalry found near Montois. The cavalry regiment passed the artillery line, left a squadron with it for protection, and attempted to pass around the woods on the southeast; but it received infantry fire without having seen any hostile cavalry. Major Genthe therefore caused the regiment to debouch to the left and joined the enveloping movement which in the meantime had been started on Montois.

While the 45th Brigade pressed through the woods against Roncourt, Prince George received at 4.30 p.m. the Crown Prince's orders to reach further out to the north with his enveloping movement and for this purpose the 48th Brigade was placed under his command.

In pursuance of these orders, the Prince immediately took the following measures:

Colonel von Schulz² with the 48th Brigade reinforced by the 1st Cavalry Regiment and three batteries of the 1st Foot Battalion (1st, 2d Light, 3d Heavy) will take up the march in the valley of the Orne as

¹ From 2.30 to 6 p.m. my cavalry division remained deployed on the right of the 6th Corps under fire from obuses and watching the deep ravined woods from which an attack might come.—Du Barail; *Memoirs*.

² Died in 1895 as Major General, active service.

far as the heights of Joeuf and Montois and will advance through the latter place to Roncourt.

General von Craushaar with the 45th Infantry Brigade will drive the enemy completely out of the woods and advance from the west on Roncourt, as soon as Colonel von Schulz's movement from the north becomes effective.

The 46th Brigade remains at my disposition.

Shortly after these orders had been issued the 48th Brigade, coming from Batilly, arrived in Auboué, so that the directed movements were in execution by 5 p.m. In order for the envelopment to be made unperceived by the enemy and decisive results to be gained by it, it had to be executed under the protection and cover of the steep ridge west of Montois in the valley of the Orne.

After 5 p.m. the separate parts of the XIIth Corps were at the following points:

The 45th Brigade had taken the woods between Auboué and Roncourt; the 46th Brigade and the 1st Heavy Battery were south of Moineville and later received orders from the Crown Prince to follow up through Coinville. The 47th Brigade stood, assembled, at the northwest side of Ste. Marie, the mass of the artillery¹ stood with continuous front on the road leading from Ste. Marie to Hautmécourt. The troops designated for the enveloping movement had started the march from Auboué to Joeuf and Montois. These troops were the 48th Brigade² with the 2d Heavy and the two light batteries of the 23d Division under Lieutenant Colonel von Watzdorf³, the 1st and 2d Cavalry Regiments and the still available parts of the cavalry division.⁴ In order to execute the ordered destruction of railroad and telegraph in the valley of the Mosel, the 1st Squadron of the Guard Cavalry Regiment, under Captain von Klenck⁵, had been sent by the

¹Corps artillery and artillery of the 24th Division.

²The 48th Brigade had one Jäger battalion and five infantry battalions present. The 2d Battalion, 106th Regiment, under Major von Mandelsloh, which had been left in Pont à Mousson on August 17th as guard for Royal Headquarters, arrived in Vernéville in the course of the 18th, and there joined the IIIrd Army Corps temporarily.

³Lieutenant Colonel von Watzdorf was slightly wounded in the foot but did not leave the troops. He died later of his wound.

⁴Three squadrons of each of the Guard Cavalry and the 3d Cavalry Regiment with the horse battery.

⁵See p. 112 *et seq.*, *ante*.

cavalry division to Uckange, as had also the 2d Squadron of the 3d Cavalry Regiment under Captain von Polenz. Railroad and telegraph were interrupted between 7 and 8 o'clock and the first reports sent by Bazaine of the events of August 18th therefore reached Emperor Napoleon only on August 22d. During the night of August 18-19th Major Klemm, with the pioneers of the 4th Company, also destroyed the railroad and the telegraph east of Longuion at Mercy le Bas.

Prince Frederick Charles and his headquarters were on the hill west of Habonville, Prince August of Württemberg and headquarters of the Guard Corps on the hill north of that place. Even before the fight at Ste. Marie headquarters of the Guard and XIIth Corps had exchanged information officers; these were Captain von Ramm of the Guards and Captain von Minckwitz¹ of the XIIth Corps who covered the 2,000 meters distance between the two headquarters on his thoroughbred in exceedingly short time and kept the Crown Prince constantly oriented by written reports of the events with the Guard Corps.

Toward 5 p.m. the 1st Guard Division was at Ste. Marie; the 2d Guard Division had detached its 3d Brigade to the IXth Corps; the 4th was at St. Ail; eight batteries were in position south and four north of St. Ail.² Thus there were 144 German pieces in action between the woods of Auboué and Habonville. Opposed to this enormous display of guns the 110 guns of the French artillery between Roncourt and Amanvillers, inclusive of the batteries of the Division Cisse (1st, 9th Regiment, 5th, 9th and 12th Mitrailleuse Batteries of the 15th Regiment), had almost ceased their fire.³ This was not due to the losses suffered by the French artillery for in most of the batteries these were slight, but to a realization of the hopelessness of an artillery duel with the German guns at long range, knowing the superiority of the German artillery as to marksmanship and fire effect, and as they had

¹Wilhelm von Minckwitz; now (1901) general of infantry and adjutant general.

²Behind the Guards, at Batilly, stood the Xth Corps, the 5th Cavalry Division, the Guard Cuirassier and Guard Dragoon Brigade.

³The 10th Battery, 13th Regiment, (12 pounder) on the hill south of Privat fired the longest. The 7th and 8th, of the 18th Regiment (4 pounder) appeared twice, but then retreated toward Plappeville.

but little ammunition left, they saved their fire for the imminent charge of the German infantry.

Towards 5 p.m. a pause in the battle occurred along the entire front of the II^d Army, during which only the Saxon artillery on the left wing kept up an intermittent fire. The further operations of the XIIth Corps were dependent on the progress of the enveloping movement, especially that of the 48th Brigade; for in the accomplishment of that brigade's task lay the actual enveloping of the hostile right wing as intended by the Crown Prince.

After 5 p.m., the pause before the storm was prematurely brought to an end by orders from Prince August of Württemberg to the Guards to attack St. Privat. It was impossible that, so early as this, the frontal attack of the Guards from the west could be supported by an advance of the Saxons from the north against St. Privat.

The first intrepid charge of the Prussian infantry against St. Privat led to no decision; the force of the charge was exhausted in front of the objective, and thousands of dead and wounded covered the blood-soaked ground. But neither this fact nor the loss of many higher officers could dampen the troops' ardor. With the few still unwounded officers at their head, the thinned out ranks had gained a foothold on the slope. They held their dearly purchased position with iron endurance and self-sacrifice. Of the 11,600 men who executed the charge only about 4,600 effectives were left of the Prussian Guard infantry and they surrounded the northwest and west front of St. Privat at 700 to 900 paces distance, at which range, even, they were still unable to fire effectively with their needle guns on the about 8,000 strong garrison of St. Privat, which were under good cover.¹

Shortly before 5.30 p.m., as soon as the 45th Brigade was in possession of the woods of Auboué and had made front east of them against Roncourt and Montois, the Crown Prince, who had remained on the hill west of Ste. Marie, ordered that the corps artillery deployed on the road to Hautmécourt should be taken forward about 900 paces in an easterly direction. Half an hour later these seven batteries

¹Major Kunz—*Der Kampf um St. Privat la Montagne.*

took a still more advanced position, facing Roncourt and extending on the left to the east corner of the woods. The four foot batteries of the 2d Battalion had, in consequence of a misunderstanding of orders, joined for a time the 47th Brigade which had been drawn up from Ste. Marie to the southern edge of the forest, but later on they arrived on the left wing of the corps artillery. The artillery poured a hot fire on Roncourt and the French right wing. The 46th Brigade, coming from Moineville, crossed the main Metz—Briey road west of the woods. The enveloping column, marching from Auboué along the right bank of the Orne, after having made a sharp turn to the right from the Orne valley, arrived on the plateau at 6 p.m.

Marshal Canrobert had well perceived the danger threatening his unsupported right wing. He saw the German troops reaching out farther and farther for the envelopment, without being able to oppose them with a counter attack in force from his center.

After Canrobert, as already stated, had, at 10.15 a.m., informed Bazaine of the enemy's approach, he, at 12.30 p.m., sent Captain de Bellegarde to report the commencement of the hostile attack, with the request to send him reserve troops and more ammunition. Bazaine replied that, if conditions became more threatening, he would send a division of the Guards, and that he would give orders to reinforce Canrobert's force by a battery of 12 pounders, also that Canrobert could get ammunition from the reserve park.

As these promises had not yet been fulfilled by 2.30 p.m., Canrobert sent Captain de Chalus to Plappeville to explain the situation again and renew the marshal's requests. Bazaine was in his parlor, where the messenger showed him on the map the situation of the 6th Corps. The commander-in-chief, however, still refused to send the Guard Grenadier Division and only gave consent to have four wagon loads of ammunition sent the 6th Corps. After de Chalus had taken his leave, Bazaine mounted his horse at 4 p.m., but did not ride to the right wing, but to the plateau of Plappeville. Here also he received a message from Canrobert, written in pencil, describing his endangered situation and again begging for support. Canrobert received no answer to this and

all that he obtained was the four wagons of ammunition and two batteries—which did not reach him until the retreat had been commenced. The Guards, the main artillery reserve and ten cavalry regiments remained inactive. Only after the loss of St. Privat did the Grenadier Division, with the artillery reserve of the Guard hastening before it, arrive behind the French right wing, just in time to cover the retreat of the 6th and 4th Corps.

Threatened with envelopment, Marshal Canrobert had decided to concentrate his forces closer around his last point of resistance, St. Privat. The 9th Line Regiment (1st and 2d Battalions) retreated, at the appearance of the Saxons in front of Montois, from Roncourt to the woods of Jaumont. Of the Brigade Becquet de Sonnay, the 1st Battalion, 75th Regiment, which earlier had fired away all of its ammunition, had been relieved in its advanced position by the 2d Battalion, 10th Regiment, by orders of General de Villiers. It proceeded north around Roncourt to Bronvaux and did not rejoin its regiment until further back and late at night. The 91st Regiment, whose 1st Battalion had made a brave stand opposite the woods, and the 75th Regiment (2d and 3d Battalions) who had suffered much by artillery fire were drawn back to behind St. Privat by General de Sonnay who formed from them and the residue of the 94th Regiment a large square, each regiment forming one side, the fourth side being kept open for assembly of all stragglers of the 3d Division. After order had been reestablished, General de Sonnay reinforced the garrison of St. Privat with a part of these troops and, with the other part, almost exclusively of the 94th Regiment, he fell farther back and occupied the edge of the forest of Jaumont; a battery went into position on his right at the crossroads, 1200 meters southwest of the Jaumont chateau, but had, however, only five rounds left for each piece. By advancing a short distance to the front, the 1st and 3d Battalions, 10th regiment, received their 2d Battalion, and the regiment, almost totally without ammunition, retired to behind St. Privat to reestablish order. General Bisson had held a few companies of the 10th and 91st Regiments back at Roncourt as a weak rear guard.

Marshal Canrobert had drawn the 12th Regiment, which

at the start had been in reserve on his left wing, up to St. Privat. This regiment was part of the brigade Le Roy de Dais. The 100th Regiment he sent to the front of his right wing, the 1st Battalion, under Major Née-Devaux, to opposite Roncourt, the 2d to the hill between Roncourt and St. Privat, and the 3d behind them in reserve.

St. Privat itself was occupied by the 9th Jäger Battalion, with three companies of the 94th Regiment, in the churchyard and vicinity; the 93d Regiment and the 3d Battalion of the 9th Regiment on the north side; the 4th Regiment on the west side; the 1st and 2d Battalions of the 12th Regiment at the entrance from Ste. Marie. This garrison was joined later by weak detachments of the 75th and 91st Regiments and dispersed detachments of the Division Levassor Sorval. The 7th Company and a part of the 3d Company of the 3d Engineer Regiment also fought in St. Privat.

The left wing south of Privat was formed by the Division Levassor Sorval with which was the 2d Battalion, 12th Line Regiment.

A few batteries, still able to carry on the battle, went into position east of St. Privat, from where they swept the open field in front as far as the woods. Du Barail's cavalry had withdrawn along the main road of retreat.

It was after 6 o'clock when the Saxon enveloping column, after having turned to the right in the Orne valley and ascended its steep, partly wooded side, appeared on the plateau and commenced to deploy west and northwest of Montois. The 3d Battalion, 107th Regiment, was led by Major von Bosze¹ through the now unoccupied Montois, where only a patrol of the French 100th Regiment was captured, and to the wooded hill toward Roncourt. The 1st and 2d Battalions, 107th Regiment, with the two light batteries, followed, leaving Montois on the left and proceeding in the direction of Roncourt. The 106th Regiment went around Montois to the north. Colonel von Abendroth² led the 1st Battalion and the 12th Company to the northeast corner of Roncourt and sent Major Brinkmann with three companies of the 3d Battalion to the left against Malancourt,

¹Died in 1895 as Lieutenant General, active service.

²Died in 1879 as Lieutenant General, active service.

from which there had come rifle shots. The 13th Jäger Battalion followed the 106th Regiment. The 2d Heavy Battery Leonhardi took position on the east slope of the wooded hill southeast of Montois. The two light cavalry regiments stood west, the two heavy regiments of the cavalry division east of Montois. In front of the left wing of the latter the 1st Horse Battery Zenker went into position and fired on hostile infantry which could be seen on the edge of the forest of Jaumont.

After 6 p.m. Crown Prince Albert went from his prior place of observation west of Ste. Marie to the left wing of the XIIth Corps in order, as it appeared, personally to witness the oncoming decision. It was his intention to first take Roncourt and then proceed to the attack on St. Privat. Prince George had the same intention and, when the 48th Brigade became visible on the plateau, started the 45th Brigade from the west against Roncourt. He accompanied this brigade with the Rifle Regiment.

As Marshal Canrobert had evacuated Roncourt and his positions north of St. Privat very skillfully, and, because of the favoring terrain, almost unnoticed, the 45th Brigade encountered in its advance only weak skirmish lines already falling back. This brigade had in its first line from left to right: the 1st Battalion, 101st Regiment, the Rifle Regiment, the Body Grenadier Regiment; in its second line: the 2d and 3d Battalions, 101st Regiment. The right wing of the brigade was extended, on the crossroad joining the Ste. Marie—Montois with the St. Privat—Roncourt road, by the 1st Guard Pioneer Company, the 3d and 4th Companies, 1st Guard Regiment and the 1st Battalion of the 3d Guard Regiment as parts of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade, from which they had separated in the advance northward on St. Privat.

The 48th Brigade pressed against Roncourt from the north, the 45th from the west, without encountering any material resistance. Major von Bosze reached with the 3d Battalion, 107th Regiment, the north side of the village¹

¹Twenty to thirty men of the French 100th Line Regiment had taken a firm stand behind a garden wall on the extreme southeast corner of the village, firing on the skirmish line of the 11th Company,

where he made a few prisoners belonging to the 10th and 91st Regiment, and then went into the open field eastward. About the same time the 1st Battalion, 101st Regiment, crossed the western part of Roncourt.

East of the village appeared five companies of the 106th Regiment, while two batteries¹ attached to the left Saxon wing took up the battle with the French artillery at St. Privat. In the meantime the Rifle Regiment had arrived on the west side of the village and the 2d and 3d Companies, 3d Guard Regiment, had reached the southeast corner of Roncourt, which they occupied after a light contact with a hostile detachment. In the village itself the Guard Pioneer Company and a few platoons of the 1st Guard Regiment which had remained there after the further advance of that regiment, were assembling. Of the cavalry under General Count Lippe, which was following up on the left wing, the heavy brigade under General von Senfft trotted toward the main road east of St. Privat to attack the apparently retreating troops there in flank, but an enfilading fire coming from the forest of Jaumont compelled it to remain under cover behind a hill.

Colonel von Abendroth² and Major von Bosze simultaneously turned against the forests of Jaumont between the quarries and the crossroad on the west edge. The enemy, the 100th Regiment and apparently also men on the 75th

when it appeared from behind a nearby hostile dressing station. The commander of that skirmish line, Acting First Sergeant Howard, without hesitation stormed the wall with his men, whereupon the enemy fled hastily into the forest of Jaumont.

¹2d Heavy and 2d Horse.

²Colonel Abendroth writes: After having somewhat closed up my command when nearing Roncourt, during the passing of the cavalry, I received orders from Colonel von Schulz that all troops were to turn against St. Privat. While experiencing a hot enfilading fire, which caused some losses, Captain von Treitschke of the general staff arrived and advised me to make a rapid charge against the forest of Jaumont on our left flank, which would materially help the corps artillery, which was about to take a decisive position. He stated that it would hardly be able to hold its position unless the hostile fire was silenced somehow. "I surely will," replied I, "but in that case you must at once ride to Colonel von Schulz and report to him that I am taking a course contrary to his orders, and ask him to support me, as I have but five companies here and that force will hardly be sufficient for the purpose." Captain von Treitschke went off with this report to the colonel and in consequence thereof the 13th Jäger Battalion very soon arrived at the edge of the forest.

Regiment, had occupied in force the edge of the forest and the road embankment immediately in its front, had placed skirmish lines behind the stone walls in front, and received the attacking nine companies of the 106th and 107th Regiment with a hot fire at long range. Hostile artillery, in position east of St. Privat, also took part in this engagement. At the very beginning of this attack Colonel von Abendroth and Major von der Decken were both wounded.¹ The color bearer of the 1st Battalion, 106th Regiment, Sergeant Albert of the 3d Company, received a mortal wound in the abdomen. The hostile skirmish lines were driven into the forest and, after the road embankment was stormed, the sister regiments, at 7.30 p.m., charged the edge of the forest. The enemy, whose strength appeared to be large, judging from the number of knapsacks left behind, retreated into the interior of the forest the dense undergrowth of which made actual pursuit impossible.

Then a battle ensued in the forest, first turning in favor of one and again of the other side. On the left flank, in a quarry close to the forest, the enemy offered strong resistance for some time, until finally driven from it. On capturing the quarry a gun was also captured, which was lost again in an unexpected repulse. The pursuit—in which three companies under Major Brinkmann also participated after having driven a weak detachment of the 100th Regiment out of Malancourt—and the fight came to an end toward 8.30 p.m. Captain Schreiber had pressed with several platoons forward as far as Bronvaux. The 13th Jäger Battalion and the 3d Battalion, 103d Regiment, which Colonel von Schultz had brought from the vicinity of Roncourt in order to have a reserve in the originally hot fight in front of the road embankment, also arrived at the western edge of the forest of Jaumont.

XII. St. Privat La Montagne

During the advance on Roncourt first Lieutenant Colonel von Schweinitz and then General von Craushaar

¹The mortally wounded were: Captains von Schütz and Frotscher, Lieutenants (of Reserve) Müller IIIId and Landgraf; acting 1st Sergeant Behring of the 106th and Lieutenant Knauth of the 107th Regiment.

were oriented concerning the situation around St. Privat, and requested to bring early support, by an orderly officer of the 1st Guard Division, Lieutenant von Esbeck of the Guard Hussar Regiment, who was to be seen everywhere indefatigable on his gray horse. Both of these commanders were able to give assurance of early support as no material resistance had been encountered at Roncourt and as General von Craushaar knew from personal information, received from Prince George, that St. Privat was to be attacked after Roncourt had been taken. Lieutenant Colonel von Schweinitz immediately led the 1st and 2d Battalions, 107th Regiment, on the west past Roncourt, east of the road, and in straight line from the north against St. Privat. General von Craushaar, accompanying the right wing of the 45th Brigade, ordered his Grenadier regiments to take direction on St. Privat. The 2d and 3d Battalions, 101st Regiment¹ turned about 1500 paces west of Roncourt to the right and, under personal leadership of the general, took direction against the northwest corner of St. Privat, thus approaching the left wing of the 1st Guard Division. The Body Grenadier Regiment² was already close to Roncourt when it received orders to turn to the right. These orders were executed by seven companies (4th, 7th, 8th and the 3d Battalion) which, in the subsequent advance under Colonel Garten along both sides of the road from Roncourt to St. Privat, filled up the gap between the 101st and 107th Regiments. As the regimental adjutant, von Loeben³, had his horse shot from under him, the orders for turning to the right did not reach the 1st Battalion, which, like the 5th and 6th Companies, passing Roncourt kept the southeasterly direction behind the 107th Regiment.

Crown Prince Albert and Prince George attentively observed the general course of the engagement and made provision for giving increased vigor and the necessary support to the attack on St. Privat which had been started

¹The 1st Battalion was at Roncourt, not under the orders of the regimental commander.

²The regiment was formed in several lines; the 1st Battalion had the 1st, 2d, and 3d Company in the first, the 4th Company in the 2d line.

³Now (1901) Lieutenant General, active list.

independently by their subordinate commanders. For this purpose, by orders of the Crown Prince, the artillery which was in the vicinity of the woods of Auboué had advanced by batteries, at the same time changing its front, heretofore against Roncourt, against the southeast. In this new artillery line, its right wing a few hundred paces north of the road from St. Privat to Ste. Marie, its left reaching to near Roncourt and surrounding the entire northwest side of St. Privat at 1400 paces range, the 1st Heavy Battery, brought up from the 46th Brigade, and the two light batteries of the enveloping column also took position. Thus there were 14 batteries¹ in action there, of which the ones first gone into position effectively supported the advance of the Saxon battalions on St. Privat. Ten Prussian batteries had gone into position against St. Privat south of the road.

For the attack on St. Privat and against the forest of Jaumont, as well as for a probable offensive advance of the French army reserves, strong reserves were kept back. These consisted of the Rifle Regiment and the 1st Battalion, 101st Regiment at Roncourt and the 47th Brigade west of Roncourt. The Crown Prince had also issued orders to the 46th Brigade, which he met en route, to abandon its direction on Roncourt and proceed toward St. Privat and had given directions to Colonel von Montbé to procure Prince George's sanction of this movement—which was granted.

Marshal Canrobert was forced to recognize that his situation was hopeless. He and his corps had done everything possible to hold their important position. Tranquilly and coolly the marshal, sitting on his brown mare, directed the defense of his last supporting point. Overcome by the enormous fire from all sides, with ammunition becoming exhausted, with no help coming from Metz, St. Privat in flames and fresh attackers continually arriving, the retreat had to be commenced. In order to be able to lead his troops into the gorge towards Metz, he held St. Privat as long as possible. He urgently begged the neighboring corps, de Ladmirault, for ammunition, as his ammunition wagons,

¹There stood from Roncourt toward the main road:—1st Light, 4th, 8th and 7th Heavy, 2d Light, 5th Heavy, 5th, 6th, 2d Horse, 6th, 1st Heavy, 4th, 3d Light, 3d Heavy.

sent off early for more, had not returned; but only a few wagonsful could be spared him.

In the slowly waning daylight St. Privat, fortress-like, burning, cut off on three sides, with its thousands of combatants, presented a magnificent, characteristically colored war picture. From all points came the flash of cannon and enormous white balls of smoke ascending from them; more in the center red lights and dense pillars of black smoke rose from the burning buildings. The hundreds of guns in action caused a hideous roar. The death dealing hail flew in all directions. The quick, sharp crackle of rifles hurtled toward the long, smoke-enveloped opposing lines. Generals and staff officers remained mounted at the head of their troops; many had their horses killed from under them. The chassepot fire was powerfully effective and the circle about the hostile position was heaped with the bodies of the storming Germans. The roar of cannon and rattle of small arms drowned the sound of all commands and a thick powder smoke covered the entire terrain. A battlefield is horrible. Enormous numbers killed and wounded in so short a time—many most horribly mutilated. Each single case of these would cause fright and horror in peace—the overwhelming number on this battlefield deadened the senses. No one who has not gone through such a baptism of fire in the first line of charging infantry can form a conception of it. Shells scream, “the rustling of the wings of the angel of death” as the French expressed it, bullets whistle and hiss, and then, when the wounded cry aloud in pain and the dead fall on all sides, men’s hearts beat fearfully in their breasts and each one needs to be alive to this duty, and firmly persuaded that even the bullets take their course only in accordance with a Higher Will.

The terrain conditions on the north side of St. Privat were entirely similar to those on the west front of attack. Here also an entirely open, gradual slope existed, on which several field walls (stone) lying immediately behind each other formed advanced low defensive lines in front of the village walls proper, and were densely occupied. The mass fire sent from all these lines by the French infantry was reinforced in addition by the batteries which had gone into

position between St. Privat and the forest of Jaumont.

It had fallen to the lot of the men of the 107th Regiment and the Grenadiers to bring about the decision in the hard struggle for the possession of St. Privat. Simultaneously, the Guard Corps charged on the right of the XIIth Corps in the general direction of the west and southwest side of the village, the inner wings overlapped each other and the charge of the two corps took the shape of combined action.

By the time the 1st and 2d Battalions, 107th Regiment,¹ the 1st Battalion in column toward the center², the 2d Battalion in two lines (5th and 8th Companies in the first line) had approached to within about 1000 paces of the village, a murderous fire was poured on them, without their being able to see the enemy. At the run, with loud hurrahs, the two battalions charged into the ever increasing rain of bullets. The first stone wall was finally reached and here Major Thierbach fell, mortally wounded. Lieutenant Colonel von Schweinitz immediately placed himself at the head of the 1st Battalion. He also fell, pierced by seven bullets. Of the 2d Battalion, the second line of which had participated in the attack on the stone wall, Major von Cerrini was wounded; Color Sergeant Donner, wounded in the left thigh, gave the colors to Captain von Pape, who carried them on to St. Privat, unmindful of a bullet which pierced the staff of the colors and his left arm. The 1st Battalion and the second line of the 2d Battalion halted. At this the wounded Major Thierbach once more raised himself and called in tones which overcame the thunder of cannon and rattle of musketry, "Forward, children, forward!" After a short fire fight, the attack was carried forward to a bayonet charge at the second wall. Captain von Pape fell, mortally wounded, with the colors of the 2d Battalion; Sergeant Thümmel, with the colors of the 1st Battalion, was severely wounded; 1st Sergeant Schuman and Lieutenant Hahn, of the same battalion, next carrying the colors, were wounded in the hand. Then Captain Wichmann placed himself in

¹According to Hasse (at that time first lieutenant and battalion adjutant, now Professor) in *Der Kamerad*, edition 1871.

²"Column toward the center" of the old drill regulations is in general similar to the present day "double column."

front of the battalion, and, carrying the colors, led the 1st Battalion to the charge on the stone wall till it was taken and a stationary fire opened from there on the gradually retreating enemy. In this charge Captain Wichmann fell mortally wounded. The battalion adjutant, von Götz, hastened up, raised the fallen colors on high, but very soon, also mortally wounded, had to relinquish them into the hands of Private Manig. It has never been ascertained who took the colors of the 2d Battalion from Captain von Pape and gave them to Sergeant Tassler. The latter assembled the men around him and continued the charge until seriously wounded. A private, whose identity has never been ascertained, grasped the fallen colors and carried them until he also fell mortally wounded. But the bullet-pierced colors, with shattered staff, were not for a moment allowed to remain on the ground; Private Götze raised them again. The history of the colors is also that of their brave battalions—an unfaltering advance under the heaviest losses.¹

During these double charges against the two stone wall sectors the Grenadier battalions had arrived on the hill alongside of the right flank of the 107th Regiment, and this, arousing ambition to be first in St. Privat, renewed the desire for battle and the bravery of the men. Another charge, a hurrah, and, with streaming, blood-covered colors in front, a third wall and the edge of the burning village were reached. But the hot day's work was not yet ended. Each single house spared by the fire so far, each garden wall, had to be captured singly. For the French who had been unable to join their retreating organizations made a firm stand at every obstacle and defended it with the valor of desperation. The color bearer of the 1st Battalion, Private Manig, fell at the village wall. Lance Corporal Hoffman grasped the colors and, holding them on high, called out: "To me, all who love their flag!" Private Götze carried the colors of the 2d Battalion into St. Privat. In single groups, intermixed with grenadiers and men from the Guards, the men of the 107th Regiment, at their head Lieutenants von Beulwitz, Röderer

¹There were a large number of one year volunteers, most of them from the University of Leipzig, in the 107th Regiment, all of them distinguishing themselves.

and Heddenhausen as also Ensign Mehlig, pressed into the village, fighting hand to hand, and at the church met the Guards coming from the other side.

Between the Prussian Guards and the 107th Regiment—advancing almost simultaneously with the latter on St. Privat on both sides of the road from Roncourt—the fifteen companies of the 45th Brigade¹ also reached the first fighting line. The deployed eight companies of the 101st Regiment placed themselves immediately beside the grenadiers of the 4th Guard Regiment which advanced against the northwest corner of St. Privat, its Fusilier Battalion finding no room for deployment and consequently becoming mixed with the Saxon troops in the subsequent assault against the north front of the village. The 3d Battalion, Body Grenadier Regiment, had to keep also to its formation of column toward the center on account of lack of room.

By energetic rushes, interrupted only here and there by short halts for rapid fire, the grenadiers stormed the last wall section and held it, though not without material losses. Lieutenant Colonel Schumann and Major von Brandenstein of the Body Grenadier Regiment were wounded, Lieutenant Colonel von Kochtitzky of the 2d Guard Regiment was seriously hurt by his horse falling with him; many company commanders and officers were killed or disabled. The 1st and 4th Companies of the 3d Guard Regiment had also advanced toward the north entrance of St. Privat and had gained a firm foothold opposite it in conjunction with the 101st Regiment.

The artillery fire massed against St. Privat now showed its enormous effect in the village crowded with French troops. Walls and buildings fell under the hail of shells, and flames arose from the debris.

General von Craushaar had his horse shot from under him and an orderly officer of the staff, to whom he was just dictating an order, was killed at his side. Several horses of the staff were wounded. The attack of the Grenadiers gained ground in spite of the heavy losses; the skirmishers came closer and closer to St. Privat; and grenadiers of the

¹From right to left: 2d and 3d Battalions, 101st Regiment; 3d Battalion, 7th, 8th, 4th Company, 100th Regiment.

101st Regiment were seen fighting close to the village wall, when the general, who was then hastening forward afoot was hit by a chassepot bullet which struck his throat, pierced his lung toward the spine, and brought him to the ground. His eyes dimmed and with the words to his adjutant Schmalz:¹ "Are our troops entering the village? Take my love to my wife," he died in the arms of his brave orderly, Schmeisky, at the moment when the grenadiers took the edge of the village.

During the short range fight the officers, imbued only with the desire to press forward, supported by efficient non-commissioned officers and men, had succeeded in carrying along all troops by their inspiring calls and example and gaining separate points along the village wall.

The common objective of the storming grenadiers was the north entrance opposite them and here the troops crowded together. The sequence in which St. Privat was reached cannot be ascertained. In any case it was merely a question of minutes. One of the first to enter was the 4th Company of the Body Regiment on the left wing of the Brigade, its leader, Lieutenant Krabitz, at its head accompanied by the wounded Lieutenants von Gregory and Claus.² In the half battalion — 7th and 8th Companies—Captain von Berlepsch was mortally, Captain Müller seriously wounded. The battalion adjutant, von Wangenheim, took command and succeeded in getting as far as the eastern wall; from where he caused the retreating troops to be fired on. The 3d Battalion, under Captain Döring, took a farm standing by itself³ and then entered the interior of the village, with Lieutenant von Brück, already twice seriously wounded, leading the 10th Company. The 9th Company, under Captain von Klüchtzner, other groups under Lieutenant von Grünwald, the seriously wounded Lieutenant Keller, and Ensign von Thielau, arrived at the churchyard. The battalion had

¹Curt von Schmalz, now Lieutenant General and Commandant of Dresden.

²First Sergeant Lubeck, Acting First Sergeant Rost, Lance Corporals Köhler and Meding deserve special mention.

³This was defended by men of the 2d Battalion, 93d Regiment, and the 9th Chasseurs under Major Andrieux.

encountered a stubborn resistance and had to resort to the bayonet and butt.

Of the 2d Grenadiers, the 2d Battalion, Captain von Engel in the lead, succeeded in taking the first houses west of the road to Roncourt and in advancing to the western part of the village. The 3d Battalion of that regiment captured the houses and outbuildings situated immediately on the road. A garden in front, surrounded by stone walls, which the French stubbornly defended, here formed the main point of attack. Lieutenant von Schwanewede, Lance Corporal Königsheim, Privates Bochmann and Mittag were the first on the other side of the wall. Captain von Rouvroy, carrying the colors of the 3d Battalion, urged his men with cheers to the charge against the village entrance. Regimental Adjutant von Malortie¹ was among the first of the attackers. The defenders in the houses kept up a hot fire through doors and windows so that a hand to hand conflict ensued. Captain von Rouvroy, Lieutenants von Werlhof, von Malortie and Schneider reached the east side of the village. Colonel von Seydlitz assembled a part of the battalion at the church.

Of the left wing of the 1st Guard Division, the 12th, 9th and 4th Companies, 4th Guard Regiment, had inserted themselves in the Saxon firing line and there participated in the storming of St. Privat. A few platoons of the 10th and 11th Companies had charged in at the north entrance, while the remaining parts turned against the east edge. The seven Grenadier companies of the Regiment, which had remained in front of the northwest side, mixed with the detachments of the Saxon right wing, made a charge from the first captured wall in the field against St. Privat which carried them into the village.

Lieutenant Colonel von Schimpff with the 1st Battalion² Body Grenadier Regiment, whom the orders for debouching on St. Privat had not reached, had observed when approaching Roncourt that that village was no longer held by the

¹Now (1901) Major General, active list.

²1st, 2d and 3d Companies. The 4th Company in the second line had debouched toward St. Privat and fought on the left flank of the Guard Grenadier Brigade.

enemy, while the battle on the right had become heavier around St. Privat. On his own initiative he therefore turned the three companies to the right. During the subsequent advance he encountered, north of St. Privat, the 3d and 4th Companies, 1st Guard Regiment under Lieutenant Colonel von Oppell which had found protection from the murderous hostile fire behind a nearly breast-high stone wall. A little to the right the 5th and 6th Companies of his regiment joined him. These detachments were opposed by French troops charged with covering the retreat of the troops out of St. Privat, and which, in material strength, prevented a further advance in rear of St. Privat. After the Saxon and Prussian companies had taken a position behind some stone farm walls and after the Prussians had bent back the line on the right wing, a heavy fire fight ensued with the superior enemy, whose repeated charges were defeated with rapid fire. These companies formed a flank in the left rear of the German attacking line in front of St. Privat. In their well covered positions they suffered comparatively little from the hostile fire; but Colonel von Roeder, commanding the 1st Guard Regiment, who had hastened to that point a short time previously, was killed at the opening of the fight there.

The French had made the bravest resistance against the Saxon attack. Opposed to the Saxons at the northwest corner of St. Privat were parts of the 9th Chasseur Battalion and the three companies of the 94th Regiment which had been kept back when the regiment went to Ste. Marie. They were followed on the right on the north front by the 93d Regiment¹ under its brave colonel, Ganzin, who lost three horses. It was joined by the 3d Battalion, 9th Line Regiment² under Captain Aragon, and, farther to the right, the 3d Battalion, 100th Regiment, under Major Poillou de Saint Mars, appears to have been engaged. Lieutenant Colonel von Schimpff's command was opposed by: the 2d Battalion, 100th Regiment, under Major Pernot, which had

¹The 93d Regiment numbered on August 17th, 39 officers and 1550 men.

²On August 17th the 9th Line Regiment numbered 30 officers, 1600 men.

retreated from the hill between Roncourt and St. Privat against the forest of Jaumont; the 94th Regiment¹, which had been enabled to replenish its ammunition at the forest; and the 10th Line Regiment under Colonel Ardant du Picq, which had assembled east of St. Privat.

The 93d Regiment had replenished its ammunition with that brought up for the 2d and 3d Chasseurs de France. It opened fire on the attackers only at 750 meters range firing volleys which soon turned into a murderous rapid fire and fire at will. When the attack had been carried to within 400 meters, Colonel Ganzin received orders to fall back and General Péchot personally also ordered the 9th Chasseurs to fall back. The retreat to the eastern exits of the village succeeded; though many small groups had to continue the defense singly. The 3d Battalion, 9th Regiment, and the 2d Battalion, 100th Regiment, found it easier to accomplish their retreat.

Marshal Canrobert, who remained to the last in St. Privat and then accompanied the rear skirmish lines, had arranged an excellent receiving position for his retreating troops in order to gain time to start his troops along their proper roads of retreat—that is those troops which were crowding themselves in disorder in the defiles, and the troops of the Division Levassor which also fled in the direction of those defiles. General Péchot with parts of the Chasseurs and parts of the 4th and 12th Regiments formed the last rear guard. East of St. Privat there is a steep rise to the hills of the quarries of Amanvillers. Here the marshal had placed ten batteries of his corps² under Lieutenant Colonel de Montluisant and the 6th and 7th Batteries, 13th Regiment, of the General Reserve, which had been sent to his support; and, as it had been possible to bring up some new ammunition, the batteries were able by a rapid fire to stop in some degree a quick pursuit by the enemy. To protect the batteries the 94th and 100th Regiments occupied the edges of the forest while the Brigade of the Chasseurs de

¹On August 17th the 94th Regiment numbered 41 officers, 1430 men.

²5th, 7th, 8th and 12th, 8th Regiment; 5th, 6th and 7th, 14th Regiment, all 4 pounders; 9th and 10th, 13th Regiment, 12 pounders.

France and the Dragoon Brigade of the 4th Corps, also remained in readiness at Marengo Auberge. On the hills east of Amanvillers the batteries of the Guard and of the 4th Corps joined the artillery position of the 6th Corps, in order to protect the retreat of the 4th Corps made necessary by the loss of St. Privat. Behind them arrived the Grenadier Division of the Guard, too late to be of any use.

Simultaneously with the Saxons, parts of the Guard Corps which were still able to do so had advanced against the west and south side of St. Privat and had entered the village. The farm Jerusalem was not taken, because it was already evacuated and stood in flames. The battle had been hottest on the north side of St. Privat. On the French side the freshest troops stood here and the attacking German troops also were fresh. As a matter of fact the decision of the heavy battle should be credited to the interference of the Saxon Corps, both through the pressure of its mass and the valorous deeds of the battalions which had entered the battle directly and by themselves. The glory therefor should not be withheld from the Saxons; still an unbiased judgment must acknowledge that the decision was brought about so rapidly and so thoroughly only in consequence of the valor and self sacrifice of the Guards.

The battle for the possession of St. Privat started at approaching darkness and ended in the night. During the charge the sun set. When the last rays had disappeared the entire western sky turned bloodred. General von Pape had ridden directly behind the storming columns into St. Privat. Alongside the church, the roof of which was in flames, he regulated the further disposition of the troops arriving there from all sides. At many places the battle continued to rage; but the enemy's resistance proper was broken. To insure the possession of the village against all contingencies arrangements were immediately made for a rapid and strong guard of the eastern edge of the village, while steps were taken to straighten out the mixed up battalions in the center of the village and carry the wounded French from the burning church and other buildings. At 8 p.m., the victor was in undisputed possession of this strong bulwark of the enemy, which had been defended with so much stub-

borness. 2000 unwounded prisoners were in the hands of the Germans.

The thunder of battle once more arose, lasting way into the night, as the German batteries advanced to take up the duel with the French artillery covering the retreat of the French 6th and 4th Corps. 23 batteries of the Guard and Xth Corps went into position on the ridge running southwest from St. Privat, some of them not being able to take part until after complete darkness had set in. Colonel Funke with five Saxon Batteries (5th, 6th, 7th, 8th Heavy and 2d Horse) had advanced by echelon into new positions northeast of St. Privat and went into action against the French batteries at the quarries of Amanvillers. Here, on his right flank, he was joined by four batteries of the 20th Division, which had proceeded from St. Ail to St. Privat¹. The 1st Horse and 2d Light Batteries (Saxon), which had taken position east of Roncourt after that Village had been taken, advanced some distance further after the fall of St. Privat and went into action against the French artillery southeast of Marengo and fired also on the columns of troops descending into the valley of the Mosel.

The Saxon cavalry regiments drawn back to behind the hill had remained at Roncourt in readiness to attack without having found an opportunity to do so, because the battle at St. Privat and in the forest of Jaumont lasted into the night. Colonel von Carlowitz² at last trotted ahead with the 2d and 3d Squadrons of the Guard Cavalry Regiment east of St. Privat intending to attack the French artillery; but the dense powder smoke and approaching night hid any objective of attack and caused him to return.

The French artillery opened a hot fire on St. Privat and the terrain near the village. The air was filled with small powder clouds showing where shrapnel was bursting; shell after shell hit the ground; the flash of the guns could be plainly seen before the shriek of the shells was heard. Villages and farms all around were in flames. It was beginning

¹General Staff Account I, p. 899.

²Now (1901) General of Cavalry, active list.

to get dark when Crown Prince Albert and Prince George met in the vicinity of this tremendous battle, halfway between Roncourt and St. Privat, and exchanged congratulations over the victory which by the loss of St. Privat had driven the French Army of the Rhine—which, in the main, had held its positions with great tenacity—back under the protecting guns of Metz¹.

The decisive Saxon attack had finally turned into an enveloping of the hostile right wing from the north. This had been the intention expressed by General von Moltke as early as 10.30 a.m. in a letter addressed to Headquarters of the II^d Army. The same thought, which Moltke in the start designated as final object of the day, was evolved, but entirely independently, by Crown Prince Albert; for in the orders issued at about 11.30 a.m. by II^d Army Headquarters to the XIIth Corps, mentioned above, this matter had not been alluded to and was not divulged by that headquarters to the XIIth Corps on this day.

Darkness fell more and more on the smoke enveloped fields and woods. Soon soft moonlight flooded the country in contrast to the fire glow of the burning villages, to the blaze of the church spire of St. Privat, showing like a glowing torch against the night sky. As in maneuvers, the signals "halt" and the recalls were heard. First one and then another of the bands took up the anthem. The night ended the battle. The German army, after eight hours' hot struggle, with great sacrifices and losses had gained a decisive victory over a brave enemy. The battle for the

¹No decisive success was gained in the center and on the right wing, neither was the movement, undertaken at a late hour, of the II^d Corps successful in supporting the VIIIth Corps. All attempts to attack the French main position, against Amanvillers against the supporting points on the upper plateau of the ridge, the farms of Moscou and Point du Jour, were fruitless. The Germans were thrown back in each instance with great loss.

The German losses on August 18th were approximately 20,000 men; those of the French 13,000 men.

On the 18th of August there were opposed to each other:

Germans, 166,400 rifles; 21,200 sabers; 732 guns.

French, 99,500 rifles; 13,300 sabers; 520 guns and mitrailleuses.

Of these were engaged:

Germans, 109,200 rifles; — sabers; 628 guns.

French, 83,500 rifles; 2,000 sabers; 398 guns and mitrailleuses.

(*Kriegsgeschichtliche Einzelschriften*, part 11.)

possession of St. Privat had been a battle within a battle. The exhaustion of the men was great, as the hot day had passed almost without a possibility of getting water. The well could endure this, but the wounded, lying on the field, suffered much.

Crown Prince Albert passed the night in a small building in Roncourt; across the street, in a small inn, Prince George found accommodation. The camp equipage of the French staff and many woolen blankets, camp stools, kitchen utensils, rice, bacon and a number of order books fell into the hands of General von Nehrhoff, and Division Headquarters utilized these things for camping in the vicinity of the 47th Brigade not far from Roncourt. The troops bivouacked where they stood, or where they found the most suitable place.¹

Of the Xth Corps the 1st Battalion, 92d Regiment and the 10th Jäger Battalion went on outpost east of St. Privat. The third battalions of the 102d and 103d Regiments and the 13th Jäger Battalion prolonged the outpost line to the north. Montois was occupied by the 24th Division by orders of corps headquarters.

¹100th Regiment at Ste. Marie; 101st at St. Privat; 46th Brigade between Roncourt and Montois; 47th Brigade and 12th Jägers at Roncourt; 106th Regiment and 13th Jägers on the west side of the forest of Jaumont; 106th Regiment, 2d Battalion, at Vernéville; 1st Battalion 107th Regiment, close to Ste. Marie; 2d Battalion between St. Privat and Ste. Marie; 3d Battalion halfway between Roncourt and the Jaumont forest; 108th Regiment at Roncourt; Corps artillery at St. Privat; artillery of the two infantry divisions at Roncourt; cavalry regiments at Roncourt and St. Privat.

EXTRACTS FROM
The 18th of August, 1870¹

BY THE
GREAT GENERAL STAFF
(*Historical Section*)

III. To the Opening of the Battle

DISPOSITIONS OF PRINCE FREDERICK CHARLES FOR THE
ADVANCE OF THE IID ARMY

WITH the IID Army the night of August 17—18th had, on the whole, passed tranquilly. Shortly before 5 a.m. Prince Frederick Charles, in the bivouac of the Saxons at Mars la Tour, issued orders to the commanding generals of the Guard, XIIth and Xth Army Corps for the 18th of August.

A comprehensive view over the terrain in the north, where the enemy was supposed to be either resting, prepared for defense, or marching off westward, was impossible on account of the low location of the village. Only later on, when near Vionville, at the fork in the road one kilometer west of that place, was a free and unobstructed view gained toward the north. The villages St. Marcel, Doncourt, Bruville and Jarny could be distinguished; but a light, early fog still covered the country and the sun was only just appearing. Nothing was to be seen of the enemy; observation through field glasses brought no better result. At Mars la Tour it had been still possible to suppose that the enemy was close opposite; at Vionville it could now be ascertained that the country immediately north of the Metz—Mars la Tour road was free of the enemy. Not far from the western exit of Vionville the commanding generals of the IXth and IIId Corps and their staffs awaited the Prince at 5.30 a.m. The instructions the Prince gave them were the same he had issued at Mars la Tour, as follows:

“The IID Army will continue the march this forenoon with the same task: to drive the enemy away from his line of retreat on Verdun—Chalons and to defeat him wherever found. For that pur-

¹Volume V of *Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik*; 1905.

pose the XIIth Corps will start as left wing echelon promptly at 5 a.m.; the Guard Corps in its right rear; on the right rear of the latter the IXth Army Corps, starting at 6 a.m. The XIIth Army Corps will take direction on Jarny, the Guard Corps on Doncourt. After it has passed between Vionville and Rézonville the IXth Army Corps will march past the immediate left of St. Marcel. (The General Staff Account, 1875, says, page 682, "leaving St. Marcel on the left."—Ed.) The VIIIth Army Corps advances in the right rear of the IXth, the VIIth farther toward Metz. The IIId Army Corps will follow the IXth and will insert itself between that corps and the Guard Corps. The 6th Cavalry Division will receive orders from General von Alvensleben II. The Xth Army Corps, to which the 5th Cavalry Division is attached, will follow the XIIth Corps in such manner as to advance in the march direction between the XIIth and the Guard Corps.

"It is difficult to state where the enemy may be found. He is supposed to have been marching off toward evening on both roads in front of and toward Conflans.¹ A bivouac of three divisions, observed yesterday at Gravelotte, probably also has marched off. If that is not the case, General von Steinmetz will attack there. It is possible that the IXth Army Corps can interfere first. If all of this demands a turn by the II Army, either to the right or to the left, cannot be said. The trains will remain where they were during the night, those of the IXth Corps between Vionville and Rézonville, where water is to be found. The corps artillery of the IIId Corps will remain at my disposition as army artillery reserve. The IIId Army Corps may find employment possibly only in demonstration.

"The advance will be made, not in long, thin march columns, but in divisions massed, the two infantry brigades behind each other, the corps artillery between the divisions of each army corps. For the present the question is merely one of a short march of less than four miles, to occupy the northern road to Verdun. A rest will take place during noon. Should a strong enemy oppose us today, we will have five army corps in place. At 1 p.m. the II Army Corps will be where the IXth now is, and thus will be at our disposal in the afternoon. General von Steinmetz has 50,000 men. The enemy who day before yesterday was opposite us may be estimated at 100,000 to 120,000 men. The number has not increased. He was twice as strong as were we—about ten to twelve divisions.

"I shall be with the head of the IIId Army Corps."²

The Guard Corps was at Hannonville, the XIIth Army Corps at Mars la Tour and Puxieux; a crossing of the two corps became unavoidable should the former keep to the march direction on Doncourt, the latter on Jarny. Therefore the commanding general of the Guard Corps asked the Prince's views about this. The Prince held to his original instructions, believing perhaps that a crossing in a march in mass formation would be of no importance. Possibly also the desire to

¹It is not improbable that the bivouac fires of the 12th Cavalry Division at Parfondrupt conduced to this supposition of the Prince, possibly also scattered firing of outposts on the French, which still loitered on the battlefield of the 16th of August.—Von der Goltz, *Die Operationen der II. Armée, 1870*; pp. 119, 120.

²Arranged from notes made at the time and place by Captain von Bülow of the General Staff of II Army Headquarters and enlarged from von der Goltz in *Die Operationen der II. Armée, 1870-71*, page 120. (See also page 49 ante.)

have the Guard Corps in the center of the expected battle as an especially tried body of troops had its share in the decision.¹

MARCH OF THE XIIITH ARMY CORPS ON JARNY

The three army corps of the II^d Army which were to advance in the first line were in readiness for the march early in the morning. The 47th Infantry Brigade of the XIIth Army Corps had had regimental and brigade drill at dawn; the ordered movement could therefore be commenced at once. The XIIth and the Guard Corps started simultaneously; the IXth Corps later on. At 5.20 a.m., immediately after the discussion with the commander-in-chief, the Crown Prince of Saxony ordered:

"The 23d Infantry Division will form an advance guard of three battalions, the cavalry regiment and one battery north of Mars la Tour, which will at once fall in and march on Jarny. The division will form north of Mars la Tour in a rendezvous position, the 45th Brigade on the right, the 46th on the left of the road to Jarny and execute the march in this formation (battalions in column with one-quarter platoon distance) a half hour interval behind the advance guard.² The corps artillery will follow the 46th Brigade with as broad a front as possible."

Thus the division was to take the directed massing only north of Mars la Tour. This was because of the difficulties of movement presented by the village and its immediate surroundings which were much cut up by ravines and overgrown.³

The following final instructions were issued at 5.45 a.m.

"The 24th Infantry Division will start at once for Mars la Tour, form north of that village in the same order as the 23d Infantry Division, and follow that division. The ammunition columns will follow one hour later behind the 24th Infantry Division through Mars la Tour with as broad a front as possible. The trains of the divisions and of headquarters will assemble and park south of Mars la Tour. The trains of the army corps march through Thiaucourt. I shall be with the 23d Infantry Division.

"The cavalry division will move with its main body by way of Puxe, but will leave one regiment four miles west for continuous observation of the road from Etain and the one from Metz through Fresnes and Manheulles. The observation and threatening of the road to Metz, and, if possible, that from Briey to Etain, must not be lost sight of."⁴

The advance guard of the 23d Infantry Division received orders to advance by way of Jarny and Labry toward Hatrize, reconnoitering

¹General Staff Account, page 683. In his posthumous papers General von Pape cites a statement made by General von Stiehle to the effect that headquarters fully knew that a crossing between the Guard and XIIth Corps would occur, but that Prince Frederick Charles was well acquainted with the Guard Corps and desired to have it in the center between two army corps with which he was not acquainted.

²This was not in consonance with Prince Frederick Charles' directions, according to which the infantry brigades were to march behind each other.

³These difficulties were greatly overestimated, as the task of marching in massed formation was new. The village could have been passed by columns on the right and left and crossed on the broad road to Jarny by a column in half platoon formation.

⁴Royal Saxon War Archives.

both flanks, and to take up a battle position there. It thus received a march objective more than five kilometers beyond the march objective, Jarny, set by corps headquarters, and this took it to the left bank of the Orne. The advance guard crossed Mars la Tour at 5.40 a.m. and was followed by the main body of the 23d Division without interval. While the corps artillery was following from south of Mars la Tour, the 24th Infantry Division from Puxieux, the 23d Infantry Division took formation in the manner directed north of the village. Only at 7 a.m. did the advance guard again start its march on Jarny.¹ It was followed at 7.30 a.m. by the 23d Infantry Division, then the corps artillery. The outposts were taken up during the march. It was nearly 9 a.m. when the 24th Infantry Division completed its concentration north of Mars la Tour so that not till then did the road from Mars la Tour to Doncourt become clear for the Guard Corps.²

Though the conformation of the terrain necessitated repeated changing of the march formation of the infantry brigades and the corps artillery moving on the right side, the advance to Jarny was on the whole made in broad columns.

At 8 a.m. the second general staff officer of the 23d Infantry Brigade, Captain von Treitschke, hastened ahead of the advance guard to Briey with the 5th Squadron of the 1st Cavalry Regiment and reported at 8.20 a.m. from the vicinity north of Labry that apparently a hostile battery and columns were west of Valleroy while hostile infantry columns were visible east of Jarny, north of Doncourt.³ This report caused General von Craushaar to halt the advance guard, which was just then traversing Jarny, and place it in position. The hill and the small woods between Doncourt and Jarny as well as Labry were occupied by the 3d and 1st Battalions, Rifle Regiment No. 108. The 2d Battalion remained in Jarny, sent one company to Conflans, and prepared itself with the assistance of the pioneer company for the defense of the village.⁴ The 2d Light Battery was about to go into position on the heights between Doncourt and Jarny, when reports arrived from the squadron in front which caused the advance guard commander to doubt the correctness of Treitschke's report.⁵ Although these reports were transmitted immediately to the main body, they arrived there too late; for the 45th Infantry Brigade had already entered the sector Moncel—Bruville which it had been ordered to occupy on receipt of the report from Captain Treitschke of the 23d

¹Royal Saxon War Archives.

²Posthumous papers of General von Pape.

³This report read: "North Labry, 18 August, 1870, 8.20 a.m. West of Valleroy battery appears in position. Also infantry column between Bois d'Abbeville and Valleroy. Also infantry columns east Jarny, north Doncourt. Von Treitschke, Capt."—Report from the advance guard of XIIth Corps, received 9 a.m., Royal Saxon War Archives. (See page 54 *ante*.)

⁴Royal Saxon War Archives.

⁵The following report conduced especially to the commander's doubts: "Sent 18th, 8 a.m. Received 8.45 a.m. Report. The right flank patrol is as far as Tichemont (Tichemont) now and has seen nothing of the enemy. The enemy is said to have retreated to Metz. Jouaville has been searched also. Von Posern, Lieut."—Royal Saxon War Archives.

Infantry Division. The Grenadier Regiment 100 occupied Château Moncel, the Grenadier Regiment 101 with its 1st and 3d Battalions the hill east of Moncel and the connecting slope on the south along the water course to Bruville. On the hill west of this water course the 2d Heavy Battery went into position. The 2d Battalion Grenadier Regiment 100 remained in reserve. The 46th Infantry Brigade also, which had arrived at the same time west of Moncel, prepared for battle on the receipt of information that the enemy had been encountered by the advance guard, let the Infantry Regiment 102 advance to opposite the hill south of Jarny and brought the 1st Heavy Battery to the front. The 103d Infantry Regiment remained at Moncel as reserve.¹ The corps artillery commenced to go into position immediately south of Jarny, later on also the 24th Infantry Division at Moncel on both sides of the Mars la Tour—Jarny road. Crown Prince Albert considered the orders of Prince Frederick Charles to advance for the present only some four miles as obeyed, and directed, as soon as he had gained the conviction from the reports of the advance guard that no danger was threatening and that Bruville also was clear of the enemy,² all detachments to be called in and the army corps to rest. The front toward the north was again assumed and the advance guard directed to seek connection with the cavalry division. This order was carried out by sending one platoon of the 1st Cavalry Regiment to St. Jean les Buzy.

Captain von Treitschke himself soon perceived his error and had reported at 8.50 a.m. that neither artillery nor columns were to be seen west of Valleroy.³ In the meantime General von Craushaar, anticipating an order to this effect from corps headquarters, started a reconnaissance toward Ste. Marie aux Chênes, Auboué and Briey, to learn if hostile columns had been there and in which direction they had departed. Corps headquarters had reported to army headquarters its arrival at Jarny, Captain Treitschke's first report, and the correction of it.⁴ In the last report the assumption was made that the enemy had retreated from Valleroy in an easterly direction; and with this began a correct perception of actual conditions.

Little rest had been enjoyed in the 12th Cavalry Division, which had passed the night in bivouacs at Parfondrupt. An alarm had been given at midnight to be in readiness in case of a hostile retreat westward or northwestward, because large bivouac fires were seen in the direction of Metz. The regiments were dismissed again only at 8 a.m.,

¹Royal Saxon War Archives.

²Colonel von Seydlitz of the Grenadier Regiment 101 reported: "The patrol which had been sent to Bruville reports that intrenchments were thrown up there. In a vineyard there numerous French equipments—about one to two wagon loads—were piled up. According to statements of inhabitants 10,000 French mounted chasseurs departed from there between 7 and 8 o'clock toward Metz and about 1,300 infantry in direction of Thoncourt (Doncourt). Col. von Seydlitz." No time stated.—Royal Saxon War Archives.

³Royal Saxon War Archives.

⁴"XIIth Corps reports advance guard at Jarny. Last report erroneous; Valleroy not occupied. Enemy appears to have turned eastward from there. Corps remains stationary until further orders."—From notes of Captain von Bülow of IIId Army Headquarters—War Archives.

those bivouac fires having turned out to be those of German troops. Shortly after 8 a.m. 2d Lieutenant von Hinüber arrived with the corps orders issued at 5.45 a.m., according to which the division was to advance to Puxe, leaving one regiment on the Conflans—Etain road, four miles west of Puxe.

The division left the 17th Uhlan Regiment behind, sent two squadrons of the 18th Uhlan Regiment for reconnaissance toward the Briey—Etain road, and at 10 a.m. marched through Olley to Puxe, arriving there at 11.15 a.m., at a time when the XIIth Army Corps was still resting at Jarny. The 17th Uhlan Regiment went into position at Villers sous Pareid, one squadron at Buzy and one at Harville. Of the 18th Uhlan Regiment the 5th Squadron reconnoitered from Thumerville toward Briey and Fleville; the 4th Squadron stood at Jeandelize.

THE GUARD AND THE XTH CORPS DELAYED AT MARS LA TOUR

Headquarters of the Guard Corps originally intended to send the 1st Guard Infantry Division through Bruville to Doncourt, the 2d through Mars la Tour to St. Marcel; but, after joining the IXth Corps, which was to march west of St. Marcel, changed this plan and chose the direction on Doncourt for the entire corps. At 5.30 a.m. the 1st Guard Infantry Division received orders "to immediately fall in on the road from Hannonville to Mars la Tour formed as closely as possible and with broad front, but in march formation."¹ The division commander, General von Pape, arriving at Mars la Tour, saw the XIIth Army Corps, the leading elements of which just then crossed the road, and learned at the same time from the chief of staff of the Guard Corps, General von Dannenberg, "that the Saxons were heading for Jarny and that the division, as soon as the road was clear, should march through Bruville to Doncourt, without touching Mars la Tour."² General von Pape caused the division to march up west of Mars la Tour north of the Hannonville—Mars la Tour road and sent under guidance of his general staff officer, Captain von Holleben, the 4th Squadron of the Guard Hussar Regiment under Captain von der Groeben to reconnoiter the march direction through Doncourt toward Jouaville.³

At 6 a.m. the 2d Guard Infantry Division received orders through Captain von Lindequist of the general staff of the Guard Corps to start, and followed with the corps artillery of the 1st Guard Infantry Division closed up and marched behind it.

As far as Mars la Tour the infantry of both divisions had marched in column of half platoon and platoons, the artillery in column of two pieces. The halt at Mars la Tour was utilized by the chaplains for field service.

¹Posthumous papers of General von Pape.

²Posthumous papers of General von Pape.

³The squadron received the following orders: First: to seek out the best road to Doncourt in the sense of the orders, and to march massed; second: to ascertain where other German troops were on the right and left; third: to assure itself if and where French troops were in the vicinity.—Posthumous papers of General von Pape.

The 4th Squadron, Guard Hussar Regiment, utilizing a gap between the Saxon columns, had in the meantime crossed the Mars la Tour—Jarny road and marched by way of Bruville, Doncourt and Jouaville toward Batilly, searching the adjacent country by numerous patrols. The first message of the squadron commander arrived at corps headquarters at 8 a.m., stating that the enemy had evacuated Bruville and Doncourt as early as the morning of August 17th, but that the direction of his march could not be ascertained.¹ Shortly thereafter Lieutenant von Rundstedt of the same squadron reported that St. Marcel and vicinity was free of the enemy;² a little later the information arrived that the Saxons also had encountered no enemy anywhere and that the IXth Army Corps was marching toward Vionville.³ Thus the advance of the Guard Corps was prevented solely by the blocking of the road through the Saxons.

Arrived on the hill south of Batilly, Captain von der Groeben caused his squadron to halt and sent the advance guard platoon under Lieutenant von Rundstedt to reconnoiter toward Habonville and St. Ail. He himself observed through a good field glass the almost treeless plain extending from Batilly to Amanweiler, St. Privat la Montagne and Roncourt. He knew that on his right was Hessian, on his left Saxon cavalry.

In the meantime Captain von Holleben had returned to the 1st Guard Infantry Division to guide it on its march to Bruville.⁴ At 9 a.m., after a wait of almost three hours, the division took up the march again in the formation taken during the advance toward Mars la Tour; the infantry marched in the main in double section column. The 1st Guard Infantry Division was followed by the corps artillery, that by the 2d Guard Infantry Division, mostly in march column, the Guard Cavalry Division bringing up the rear. After the start corps headquarters received orders from army headquarters to halt for the present at Doncourt. As soon as the leading elements of the leading division reached the village the corps commander ordered the corps to march up in assembly formation and reported that fact at 10.25 a.m. to army headquarters, adding that the patrols sent out toward Ste. Marie aux Chênes and Briey had so far reported nothing of the enemy.⁵

¹Report of Captain von der Groeben: "Inhabitants of Bruville state that the French left Doncourt yesterday morning at 9 a.m. Their march direction is not known. Some say toward Verdun, others toward Briey, others toward Metz. Yesterday forenoon thunder of cannon at Metz. Count Groeben, Captain." Time not stated.—War Archives.

Captain Groeben later reported that tracks of the march of large bodies of troops were seen leading toward Amanvillers and Jouaville. When the 1st Guard Infantry Division arrived at Doncourt the correctness of this report was evidenced.—Posthumous papers of General von Pape.

²Report of Lieutenant von Rundstedt: "Metz—Verdun road, 9.15 a.m. Villages of Bruville, St. Marcel, Doncourt, as well as intermediate farms, clear of the enemy. In Doncourt large hospital with Prussian wounded. On my right flank are the 6th Dragoons; they have patrols across the road. According to my instructions I remain here, requesting further orders. Von Rundstedt, Lieutenant, Hussar Guard Regiment."—War Archives.

³War Archives.

⁴Posthumous papers of General von Pape.

⁵Report of the Guard Corps: "At Doncourt, 18-8; 10.25 a.m. Head of Guard Corps just arrived at Doncourt, will take position there and await further orders. Patrols sent out in direction of Ste. Marie on the road to Briey so far have reported nothing of the enemy. Three hundred French and Prussian wounded in Doncourt. According to a proclamation posted in the villages the Emperor has left Metz. A. B. (Signed) von Dannenberg, Maj. Gen. Report of wounded enclosed. Attest: von Roon, Major.

In the Guard Corps the general opinion was that no battle would ensue on August 18th, touch with the enemy having been completely lost. The general belief was that the corps would go into bivouac at Doncourt and officers were already being sent out to the nearby villages to requisition supplies and men to get water.

* * *

THE IID ARMY AT 10.30 A.M.

At 10.30 a.m. the three army corps in the first line had reached the line Caulre—Doncourt—Jarny; the formation in echelons had actually ensued as contemplated by Prince Frederick Charles. The Guard Corps, which in consequence of the crossing of the march was at that time just going into position at its march objective, Doncourt, remained about one kilometer behind the XIIth Army Corps, already in position at Jarny. The IXth Army Corps, also assembled at Caulre, was in turn about one kilometer behind the Guard Corps. Of the army corps in the second line, the Xth Corps which had been started toward Bruville was still at Mars la Tour; the IIId Corps, held at the disposition of Royal Headquarters, was at Vionville and Buxières. These corps also having moved into the gaps between the corps of the first line, had assumed about the relative position and location intended by Prince Frederick Charles when issuing his orders in the morning.

* * *

ROYAL HEADQUARTERS AND THE THREE ARMY HEADQUARTERS ON THE MORNING OF THE 18TH OF AUGUST. THE SITUATION REMAINS DOUBTFUL

Royal Headquarters had left Pont à Mousson at 4 a.m. and had been since 6 a.m. on the hill near Flavigny, from which at least a part of the movements of the troops could be seen. After conversing with his commanding generals Prince Frederick Charles had taken his position on the road west of and close to Vionville. General von Steinmetz had been since 8.20 a.m. on the hill south of Gravelotte, from where he attentively observed the enemy on the other side of the Mance valley. General von Moltke had sent higher staff officers to the different army headquarters as information officers: Major von Holleben, of the Saxon General Staff, to the 1st Army; Lieutenant Colonel von Brandenstein, Chief of Section of the Great General Staff, to the IId Army.

At 6.15 a.m. Prince Frederick Charles reported to the King:

“The XIIth Army Corps, as left wing echelon of the IId Army, has started the march to Jarny. The IId Army Corps will have reached Buxières at noon. No enemy marching in the direction of St.

Marcel and as far as Doncourt. Their late camp at St. Marcel is empty. There was marching on the road during the night."¹

Thus the II^d Army had no enemy in its front. But on the right flank firing was heard in the direction of Gravelotte and as that place could be seen only in part from the location of army headquarters, the Prince sent Captain von Bergen, 2^d Engineer Officer of army headquarters, out for reconnaissance to ascertain what had become of that part of the French army seen at Gravelotte yesterday.

The first report sent back by this captain at 7.30 a.m. stated confidently "The French camp which was seen yesterday has departed in a northerly or northeasterly direction."²

Shortly before that time the picket under Lieutenant von Rohr of the 3^d Squadron, 15th Uhlán Regiment³ reported that, east of Gravelotte, there were still at that time 6,000 to 8,000 infantry; that the artillery had nearly all departed; the whole creating the impression of a hasty retreat on Metz.⁴

Later reports arrived from the outposts of the 18th Infantry Division, stating that Gravelotte was unoccupied, that the "general" was being sounded in the hostile camp and that movements could be seen of the enemy toward the northwest.

Thus, as the Prince had told his commanding generals in the discussion in the morning might be probable, the enemy here also was marching off; but new doubts arose as to his direction, whether toward Metz or into the interior of France. Therefore Headquarters of the XIIth Army Corps was requested at 7.45 a.m. to take due care that all reports concerning the important road to Verdun be immediately transmitted to army headquarters. Soon, however, other reports arrived. Lieutenant Colonel von Brandenstein, information officer from Royal Headquarters, arrived at Headquarters II^d Army at 8 a.m. and brought information that the French Guard still stood on the left wing.⁵ Ten minutes later Captain von Bergen reported that the hostile camp still was there, because he had seen it himself, though apparently the number of troops therein had decreased.⁶

¹How he arrived at that supposition cannot be stated.—War Archives; von der Goltz, *Die Operationen der II. Armée*, page 122.

²War Archives; also von der Goltz, *Die Operationen der II. Armée*, page 124.

³Of the 6th Cavalry Division. The picket was in front of the III^d Army Corps.

⁴The complete report read: "I went to within 400 paces of the hostile camp. There are no hostile cautionary measures. Strength about six to eight divisions. As far as can be seen almost the entire artillery has driven off; one or two cavalry regiments only with white coats. All indicates hasty retreat to Metz. At this time 6,000 to 8,000 infantry east of Gravelotte. I ride again forward, will report later. Squadron has not yet been watered, no opportunity therefor. South of Gravelotte considerable number of wounded of the 56th Regiment; they have had no attention since yesterday. 4.50 a.m. Von Rohr." War Archives.

Von der Goltz in *Die Operationen der II. Armée*, 1870-71, page 122, is of the opinion that by the reported six to eight divisions French half-battalions were meant. It is evident that an error caused "divisions" to be written instead of "battalions."

⁵General von Steinmetz had erroneously reported the day before that hostile infantry was north of the forest of Vaux.

⁶Captain von Bergen's report: "Corner of forest opposite Gravelotte, 7.15. My own eyes show me that the camp on the Bois des Gembeaux (Genivaux) hill still remains. According to reports of outposts and field picket there has been movement there since 3 a.m. and the report of the evacuation of the camp to the 30th Brigade refers apparently only to a diminution in numbers there. Captain von Bergen."—War Archives; also von der Goltz, *Die Operationen der II. Armée*, page 124.

DIFFERENCES IN THE ESTIMATES OF THE SITUATION HELD BY
GENERAL VON MOLTKE AND PRINCE
FREDERICK CHARLES

Minutely examining the results of August 17th and personal impressions during the morning hours the general opinion had gained ground at Royal Headquarters that the main forces of the enemy were to be looked for towards Metz. As early as 7.20 a.m. directions had been sent to the II^d Army that in case the northern road to Verdun should be found clear of the enemy, the Guard and the XIIth Army Corps were not to be sent too far to the left and that the III^d Army Corps should be stopped at Vionville, to have it support the Ist Army in case of need.¹

At 8.30 a.m. Lieutenant Colonel von Verdy, Chief of Section of the Great General Staff, arrived at Headquarters II^d Army, by direction of General von Moltke, and stated as follows:

"General von Moltke is of the opinion that the hostile main force is in front of Metz, that its position extends about to Amanvillers. It is therefore desired to keep the march in the same direction as before. If the correctness of his opinion is proven the Ist Army will attack in front. In such case the Guard Corps is designated to serve as reserve, the IXth to envelop the hostile right wing, the remainder of the corps to halt for the present. Reports clearing up the situation desired as early as possible."²

In the first orders which Prince Frederick Charles had issued he had already arranged for the halt of the corps of the II^d Army which Royal Headquarters considered necessary. These orders were now repeated.³ The IXth Army Corps received orders to have the reports of its cavalry sent direct to General von Moltke, for it stood nearest the enemy. The Prince sent back word to Royal Headquarters, by Lieutenant Colonel von Verdy, that in his opinion it was probable that the enemy was retreating in a northerly and northeasterly direction on account of the railroad from Metz to Diedenhofen.⁴ Thus the Prince held fast to his theory of the hostile retreat. That such a retreat was being made in a northwesterly direction no longer seemed to him credible and it appeared to him more probable that the enemy would try an evasion through the valley of the Mosel in a generally northern direction than that he would make a stand at Metz to accept battle there. It still remained uncertain how to utilize the II^d Army; further reports were awaited. By 8.50 a.m. the reports from Captain von der Groeben of the Guard Corps arrived, stating Doncourt to be free of the enemy without giving the hostile march direction, also the one from Captain von Treitschke of the XIIth Army Corps, who erro-

¹This order was sent to the III^d Army Corps direct.

²When Lieutenant Colonel von Verdy rode away from Royal Headquarters the first report from Captain von Bergen concerning the departure from the camp at Moskau had not arrived. It came at 8.05 a.m.

³Only the IXth Army Corps received these orders in writing.

⁴This view of headquarters of the II^d Army was expressed as early as the 15th of August in a telegram from General von Stiehle to General von Moltke. In that telegram is stated that the hostile retreat was being made by rail from Metz and by marching.—War Archives.

neously supposed the enemy in the vicinity of Valleroy, and those from the IXth Army Corps, which, arrived at Caulre, had met no enemy either in a northern or northeasterly direction. It now again became doubtful whether the enemy should not be sought in the northwesterly direction. Whatever stood at Metz might be but a part of his main force, a sort of rear guard whose position hardly reached far to the north, else the IXth Army Corps would have encountered an enemy to the northeast. The report from Crown Prince Albert of Saxony, which arrived at 9.30 a.m., and stated that Captain Treitschke's first report was erroneous and that in all probability the hostile forces had retired in an easterly direction, still gave no basis for a definite estimate of the situation.

Only the fact that the non-receipt of further reports from the XIIth Army Corps confirmed in an indirect way the absence of hostile forces to the northwest caused the Prince to turn his attention eastward in the course of the next half hour.

If a part of the enemy had actually marched off, it could now hardly be overtaken; but there still stood at Metz another part which had to be first reckoned with. It appeared to the Prince now necessary that the II Army should turn against Metz. Of course nothing was known so far of the enemy at Metz except as to his left wing. Where the right wing was to be sought might be deduced from the fact that the IXth Army Corps had not found him northeast of Caulre. Thus it would hardly extend to beyond Folie. The enemy had a frontal extension west of Metz of not more than five kilometers; that could hardly be the entire French army of August 16th, yet certainly a large part of it.

Thus apparently the enemy was considering not a regulation defensive, but rather the parrying of a threatened attack since the intended retreat with all parts of the army had been impossible.

Almost simultaneously with the report from Crown Prince Albert the chief of staff of the I Army, General von Sperling, had arrived at Headquarters, II Army. He had been sent to the King to receive additional orders for the I Army, and, in passing, stopped to consult with Prince Frederick Charles. He reported the measures taken by and the position of the I Army and concerning the enemy added, "that he was still in force on the heights and had not moved."

When he left he was given the last report received from Crown Prince Albert, with a few additions, to hand to the King.¹

At 9.50 a.m. Captain von Bergen reported that it appeared that a concentration was taking place in the hostile camp.²

¹General von Sperling received a paper containing the following: "Crown Prince of Saxony reports 8.50 a.m. that the XIIth Corps is at Jarny; thorough reconnaissances resulted in ascertaining that the last report sent was erroneous; Valleroy was not occupied. Enemy appears to have turned east from there. The XIIth Corps will remain at Jarny until further orders. Saxon cavalry will reconnoiter on the road toward Briey. General Wrangel (IXth Corps) has a battalion in his front at Caulre Ferme." Time, place, signature absent.—War Archives.

²The report from Captain von Bergen reads: "Right wing, VIIth Army Corps: outpost line; 8.45. Lively movements in the camp, as it appears, concentration of the infantry more to the rear, the edge of the hill still occupied by artillery. The movement during the night in the camp was caused by additions arriving, new bivouac fires were lighted. At this time only unimportant firing by outposts. With compliments of General von Zastrow. Von Bergen, Capt."—War Archives; also von der Goltz, *Die Operationen der II, Armée*, page 124.

Thus the enemy stood west of Metz; at least there were no present indications of a marching off. The following information from General von Moltke, received shortly before 10 a.m., was therefore all the more surprising to Prince Frederick Charles:

“On the right wing of the VIIth Corps unimportant skirmish firing. The troops visible on the hill toward Metz appear to move northward—that is, toward Briey. It does not look as if the Ist Army will require support by more than the IIId Corps from Vionville or St. Marcel. Hill south Flavigny, 9.20 a.m.”¹

This shows that General von Moltke had finally come to the opinion already held by the IIId Army, since he now contradicted what he had caused Prince Frederick Charles to be informed of through von Verdy and what had been his original thought, namely, that the enemy still stood west of Metz. The change in his opinion is easily accounted for. The first reports of the day, which had strengthened Prince Frederick Charles' belief in the enemy's marching off, had had their effect on General von Moltke also. Personal observations of movements in the hostile camp, which might be interpreted as a march toward the north or northwest, heightened this effect. In any case the information sent to the IIId Army as to the new estimate of the situation was stated very cautiously; its main purpose was to warn against over-hasty measures.

Prince Frederick Charles at once perceived that this information had been sent before the arrival of General von Sperling, who could have given information of the conduct of the enemy opposite Gravelotte and of the last reports received by the IIId Army. He supposed at once also that General von Moltke, after having heard General von Sperling, would return to his former estimate of the situation. The conviction that at Metz he had opposite him not only a part, but the main forces of the enemy, which had had no time to draw off, gained more and more ascendancy in the Prince's mind.² From the vicinity of Briey, where he knew the 12th Cavalry Division operated, had come no report of any kind of the enemy; most of the reports pointed towards Metz. Too much time had now been lost in trying to ascertain the enemy's whereabouts and, although there still was great uncertainty, the Prince decided to act at once on the orders from Royal Headquarters which Lieutenant Colonel von Verdy had brought. At 10 a.m. he issued the following orders to the IXth Army Corps:

“The corps will fall in and march in direction of Vernéville to La Folie and, if the enemy's right wing is there, open the engagement by for the present deploying a numerous artillery. The Guard Corps will follow up to Vernéville.”

A quarter of an hour later the following orders were sent the Guard Corps:

“The Guard Corps continues the advance by way of Doncourt to Vernéville and takes position to support the IXth Corps which is

¹Von Moltke's Military Correspondence, 1870-71. No. 177.

²War Archives.

marching toward La Folie against the hostile right wing. Reconnaissance left through Amanvillers and St. Privat la Montagne, as well as early reports desired."¹

The employment of these two corps thus was in consonance with Moltke's directions. Of the remaining corps of the II^d Army, whose participation did not appear necessary for the present, the III^d received orders to follow from Vionville to Caulre; the Xth to halt at Mars la Tour; the XIIth at Jarny.² The XIIth Corps received copies of the orders issued to the IXth Army Corps and the Guard Corps.

The information officer of Royal Headquarters, Lieutenant Colonel von Brandenstein, undertook to take the Prince's orders to the King. With reference to the last information from General von Moltke, the Prince caused to be added that he had designated the IXth Army Corps for the direct support of the Ist Army and requested permission to take control again of the III^d Army Corps now at the disposition of Royal Headquarters for that same purpose.

To the satisfaction of the Prince his estimate of the situation was proven correct by the subsequent reports. The Xth Army Corps reported that, according to statements of wounded French soldiers, the French had retreated in great haste at noon on the 17th from Doncourt toward Metz;³ the Guard Corps reported its arrival at Doncourt and stated that the country south of Briey was clear of the enemy; and Captain von Bergen sent a fourth report, according to which the French had taken up a battle position east of Gravelotte.⁴

In the meantime Royal Headquarters had again reverted to its original estimate of the situation. The first cause of this was a report received at 9.35 a.m. from Major von Holleben, information officer with the Ist Army: "The enemy still has important fighting forces at the forest of Genivaux and appears determined to accept battle there."⁵

At 10 a.m. General von Sperling arrived and reported the same of the enemy. He added that the VIIth Army Corps still occupied the forest of Vaux, which was passable only for infantry, and that it had one brigade in the Mosel valley. He also handed over a copy of Crown Prince Albert's report, stating the correctness of the report of the appearance of hostile forces at Valleroy. The second report from Captain von Bergen, according to which the hostile camp east of Gravelotte still existed, had also arrived.⁶ Like Prince Frederick

¹ War Archives; also von der Goltz, *Die Operationen der II. Armée*, page 130.

² In the orders to the Xth Corps is stated how the Prince intended to employ the corps kept back later on. The XIIth Corps, if no interference appeared necessary, was to proceed to Ste. Marie aux Chênes; the Xth to Jarny, the II^d to Mars la Tour. Thus it was intended to place the corps in a large circle facing east as a support for the IXth and Guard Corps fighting for a decision at Vernéville.—War Archives.

³ War Archives; also von der Goltz, *Die Operationen der II. Armée*, page 132.

⁴ War Archives; also von der Goltz, *Die Operationen der II. Armée*, page 132.

⁵ War Archives.

⁶ This report had already been received by von Moltke at 8.30 a.m., but appears not to have had any material effect, as it simultaneously spoke of a "diminution" of the hostile forces.

Charles, General von Moltke without delay decided on issuing the decisive orders for the battle. Even though these orders were based in first line on the fact that the enemy stood east of Gravelotte, the possibility of a marching off toward Briey was not entirely lost sight of.

ROYAL HEADQUARTERS ISSUES ORDERS FOR THE ATTACK—FURTHER
MEASURES TAKEN BY THE IId ARMY UP TO 12 NOON

Orders from Royal Headquarters, dated 10.30 a.m., read:¹ ²

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These orders were addressed to the IId Army. The chief of staff of the Ist Army, General von Sperling, who was present, was informed of the contents and received verbal directions that the Ist Army should attack only when the IId Army had passed beyond its left wing and was in readiness to participate. Soon after 11 a.m. General von Sperling returned to the Ist Army.

Shortly after the orders of Royal Headquarters had been sent to the IId Army General von Moltke received the report of the information officer, Lieutenant Colonel von Brandenstein, concerning the latest orders of Prince Frederick Charles.³ This report showed that Prince Frederick Charles had already acted in consonance with the estimate entertained at Royal Headquarters. The two headquarters thus were of the same opinion as to conditions with the enemy: the opponent stood west of Metz, and there lay the decision. While Prince Frederick Charles had been cautious in his orders and held back the Guard and the XIIth Army Corps, because of the instructions brought to him by Lieutenant Colonel von Verdy, General von Moltke had gone farther and given the enveloping idea a far more definite and forcible character by starting the two corps toward Batilly. To the request of Prince Frederick Charles, contained in the report which Lieutenant Colonel von Brandenstein brought to Royal Headquarters, to again be allowed the disposition of the IIId Army Corps, Royal Headquarters assented; the IId Army Corps, now marching up, was destined, in place of the IIId Corps, for the support of the Ist Army.

The orders from Royal Headquarters were received by the IId Army at 11 a.m. Immediately after their receipt two reports arrived, both of which tended to supplement and clear up the hitherto by no means definite information concerning the enemy. The first was one from General von Manstein stating that inhabitants said that bodies of

¹These orders, omitted here, are as given by von der Goltz, see page 61, *ante*.

²Moltke's Military Correspondence, 1870-71, No. 178.

³The report read: "Hill west of Vionville, 18-8; 10.10 a.m. His Royal Highness is sending orders to the IXth Corps to advance from Caulre through Verneville on La Folie, and should the right wing of the enemy be there, to commence the attack with strong artillery. His Royal Highness informs me that the IXth Corps is selected for the support of the Ist Army and requests permission to draw up the IIId Corps with which he will take station. The Guard Corps is marching on Verneville and will halt there. No reports so far received from the XIIth Corps as to its having encountered the enemy. The cavalry of that corps is reconnoitering toward the road through Briey. The main body of the corps remains at Jarny for the present. Von Brandenstein."—War Archives.

troops were north of Jouaville and cavalry and artillery northeast of Vernéville. The second came from Lieutenant Colonel Scholl, reading:

"Report from hill near Batilly: Hostile patrols opposite Ste. Marie—Amanvillers; troops marching on main road; camp at St. Privat la Montagne; hostile patrols advancing at a trot. 10.25 a.m."¹

The second report gave the first definite basis as to where the enemy's right wing was to be looked for. So far the Prince had supposed it to be at Folie; General von Moltke, early in the morning at Amanweiler, later at Montigny la Grange; but those were merely suppositions. All measures taken up to this time for battle were based on uncertainty as far as the decisive operation of enveloping the hostile right wing was concerned. In spite of this fact neither the first nor the second report found special consideration at Headquarters II^d Army. The first in part was based on statements of inhabitants, and thus could not be believed in whole; the second did not state how strong the enemy was who stood or had stood at St. Privat, and was not confirmed by later reports. The thought that the enemy might be at St. Privat to defend himself was not considered; the camp there and the movements of troops were considered parts of the hostile army attempting to march off and get away from the Germans. Prince Frederick Charles' orders, now necessary in consideration of orders from Royal Headquarters, were based on this supposition. After he knew that his opinion and that of Royal Headquarters were the same he intended to carry on the envelopment of the enemy on as large a scale as possible. Not only the road leading to Briey but also the one in the Mosel valley leading down stream was to be blocked for him. Orders were sent at 11.45 a.m. to the XIIth Army Corps to march to Ste. Marie aux Chênes, that is as far as the Metz—Woippy—Briey road, to secure against Briey and beyond Conflans, and to send as much cavalry as possible into the valley of the Mosel to interrupt the railroad and telegraph leading to Diedenhofen. The Guard Corps was ordered to hasten its march to Vernéville, to extend it to Amanweiler and from there proceed envelopingly to attack the right wing of the enemy. Discretion was left it to use the road through Habonville. The IXth Army Corps was advised that, if the hostile line in its front extended farther north, it was to delay a serious engagement until the Guard Corps was making its attack from Amanweiler. The general attack was expected by the Prince to begin about 1.45 p.m.; by that time the Guard Corps, which had started by his orders at 10.15 a.m., could arrive at Amanweiler from Doncourt.² These dispositions were reported in outline to Royal Headquarters.

Prince Frederick Charles also now thought of drawing up the army corps of the second line. They were to strengthen, in case of need, the attack in front. At 12 noon orders were sent to the II^d

¹War Archives; also von der Goltz, *II. Armée*, page 133. (See page 60, *ante*.) By "Troops marching on main road" movements of hostile infantry from vicinity of Amanweiler to St. Privat are meant.—Statement of Colonel Scholl.

²See pages 58 and 63, *ante*.

Army Corps to proceed to Rezonville as reserve for the Ist Army; to the IIId Army to proceed to Vernéville, the Xth to St. Ail.¹ While these orders were written down, the first thunder of cannon was heard in direction of Vernéville.

MEASURES TAKEN BY THE CORPS COMMANDER IN PART ANTICIPATE PRINCE FREDERICK CHARLES' ORDERS

At 10.30 a.m. the IXth Army Corps had received the orders of Prince Frederick Charles, dated 10 a.m., to advance to the attack in direction of Foie, should the enemy stand there, and the corps had started at once. The Guard Corps received the orders, dated 10.15, to advance as far as Vernéville, shortly after 11 a.m. and, a little later, the XIIth Army Corps received a note from IIId Army Headquarters giving information of the orders issued by that headquarters. In consequence of progressive reconnaissance these two army corps had come to an estimate of the situation differing from that held at Royal and IIId Army Headquarters. As corps headquarters received the reports earlier they could form a clear judgment earlier and, when the commanding generals of the Guard and the XIIth Army Corps decided on independent action based on their estimate of the situation, they fortunately anticipated by their actions the 11.30 a.m. orders of Prince Frederick Charles.

When Captain von der Groeben with the 4th Squadron, Guard Hussar Regiment, started his observation toward 9 a.m. on the hill at Batilly, a light fog still screened the surrounding country. Farther south, at the little wood between Jouaville and Habonville, stood a platoon of Hessian cavalry under Lieutenant Scholl, with which he took up connection.² North of Batilly Saxon cavalry was seen advancing for reconnaissance. It is true that Captain von der Groeben had orders not to go beyond Jouaville, but patrols had been sent to Habonville, Ste. Marie aux Chênes and for connection with the neighboring corps, and at 9.30 a.m. a patrol of eight horses went toward Auboué for permanent observation there of the road from Briey. The captain himself intended to go farther ahead with the squadron to St. Ail, and had already started out the advance guard platoon when the veil of fog was suddenly lifted and a large number of white tents shone in the sun on the hill between St. Privat and Roncourt. Two farmers, who just then arrived from Ste. Marie aux Chênes, narrated that troops had been there since yesterday afternoon like swarms of ants; all arms were in evidence. Immediate report of this was sent to General von Pape and a copy sent to Lieutenant Scholl with request to forward it to army headquarters, as the Hessian troopers knew the road better. Lieutenant Scholl had made the same observation simultaneously and had already sent a report of it to headquarters of the IXth Army Corps. Shortly thereafter Captain von der Groeben saw the enemy strike the

¹ See pages 63 and 64, *ante*.

² Statement of Captain (at that time) Count von der Groeben.

tents, one and a half or two battalions departing toward Ste. Marie aux Chênes and smaller infantry detachments and two squadrons marching toward St. Ail and Habonville. Saxon troopers, riding toward Ste. Marie aux Chênes, received fire. Then the enemy sent some infantry detachments ahead across the ravine running from Habonville to Auboué as far as the small wood northeast of Batilly. All these events were reported. Captain von der Groeben, supported by a platoon of the 9th Dragoon Regiment which had just come up,¹ attempted to attack a hostile squadron trotting toward Habonville; the latter gave way and disappeared into the ravine running from Auboué northward, as did also other cavalry detachments which were riding ahead by way of Ste. Marie. A platoon, under Lieutenant Count von Lüttichau, was sent out to ascertain how far the enemy's position extended northward and to place relays for the patrol already sent toward Auboué. In the meantime the Guard Hussar Regiment came up and the 4th Squadron joined it.

The first report sent from Batilly by Captain von der Groeben arrived at the Guard Corps at 11 a.m. It read:

"Hill near Batilly, 10.50 a.m. People just arriving from Ste. Marie aux Chênes bring the information that French infantry is there, but especially that many French troops are at St. Privat la Montagne."²

At the same time corps headquarters received the orders from Prince Frederick Charles of 10.15 a.m., to follow the IXth Corps to Vernéville and it had information that that corps was in close touch with the enemy. After careful consideration of all circumstances the commanding general decided, in order to follow the orders from army headquarters as well as to act in consonance with the fact of the presence of hostile forces at St. Privat, to advance the leading division and the corps artillery toward Habonville, with the other division on Vernéville. At 11.30 a.m. this decision to debouch toward Habonville and the presence of hostile troops at St. Privat was reported to army headquarters and information also sent to the XIIth Army Corps.³

At this time the 1st Guard Infantry Division was assembled at Doncourt; behind it the corps artillery was just going into assembly formation; the leading elements of the 2d Guard Infantry Division were approaching Bruville.

While heavy cannon fire, interspersed with rifle fire, was already heard coming from Vernéville the 1st Guard Infantry Division started from Doncourt to Habonville, though after some little time had been lost in calling back the men sent out to procure water.⁴ Toward 12 noon the 2d Guard Infantry Division received orders, through Captain von

¹From the Xth Army Corps.

²War Archives.—The report from Lieutenant Scholl, of similar import, reached headquarters, IXth Army Corps, at 11 a.m. and was immediately transmitted to army headquarters.

³At the time this report was sent Prince Frederick Charles, believing the Guard Corps marching on Vernéville, issued his attack orders, which assigned the Guard Corps to Amanweiler giving it permission to go by way of Habonville, which it had already done.

⁴Posthumous papers of General von Pape.

Stülpnagel of the general staff of the Guard Corps, "to march through St. Marcel and Vernéville toward La Folie and attack the enemy there."¹ The division sent out an advance guard and turned across country from Bruville toward Caulre; the infantry marched in battle formation, the artillery in platoons.² The 2d Guard Uhlan Regiment trotted ahead to Caulre and soon sent a report concerning the battle of the IXth Army Corps at Vernéville.

At the same time that the Guard Corps started its 1st Division from Doncourt to Habonville the Crown Prince of Saxony decided to lead his corps farther in a northeasterly direction. The 12th Cavalry Division, whose patrols mainly reconnoitered on the left bank of the Orne in a northwesterly direction, had nowheres encountered an enemy. Captain von Treitschke had proceeded with the 5th Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, by way of Valleroy toward Briey without meeting anything but a few weak hostile Dragoon patrols.³ On the other hand, Saxon patrols were fired on from Moineville;⁴ Lieutenant von Posern, with a platoon from the advance guard squadron, encountered, toward 11 a.m. southwest of Ste. Marie aux Chênes, bodies of French infantry and cavalry which retired into the village in front of the platoon when it started to charge.⁵

Crown Prince Albert saw no enemy in his front either to the north or northwest. He knew, however, that the IXth Army Corps and the Guard Corps had been started toward an enemy west of Metz and that they probably were now marching. Although his orders still confined him to Jarny he decided to lead his corps toward where the

¹ War Archives.

² The 4th Guard Infantry Brigade, in the lead, was ordered to take for its march objective the red roof of Caulre and to march rapidly; the enemy was found and the IXth Army Corps already engaged.—War Archives.

Order of march of the 2d Guard Infantry Division.

Advance Guard:

2d Guard Uhlan Regiment.

1st Bn., 4th Guard Grenadier Regiment.

Main Body:

2d and Fus. Bns., 4th Guard Grenadier Regiment.

2d Guard Grenadier Regiment.

1st, 2d and Fus. Bns., 8d Guard Grenadier Regiment.

1st Guard Grenadier Regiment.

Guard Heavy Battery.

2d and 8d Guard Pioneer Companies.

8d Bn., Guard Foot Artillery.

1st Sanitary Detachment.

Field Hospital.

During the march three lines were formed, and the 5th and 6th Light Batteries drawn up to the advance guard.

³ Royal Saxon War Archives.—Five hostile dragoons fell back at 9 a.m. from the vicinity northwest of Valleroy through Mussot toward Lantefontaine. That Valleroy was free of the enemy was proven by the following report:—

"Labry, sent the 18th, 10.15 a.m. According to statement of two Prussian Guard Dragoons, who escaped from French hands, and who fled through the small wood occupied by the 2d Company, Metz is said to have been evacuated by the French Army. A farmer's boy, just returned from Valleroy states that no French soldier was in Valleroy. Just now apparently our columns (cavalry) are marching from Vernéville past Batilly toward Valleroy. Von Lindemann, Lieut.-Colonel.—Royal Saxon Archives.

⁴ Royal Saxon War Archives.—The report originates with the 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment.

⁵ Royal Saxon War Archives.

enemy had been reported, that is in a northeasterly direction. In consideration of the existing uncertainty, however, he formed the left wing division in more depth. At 11.30 a.m. he ordered:¹

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This decision was reported to army headquarters. The 12th Cavalry Division received the following orders:

“To draw immediately closer to the army corps at the Bois de Ponty, but to leave one regiment behind and start it toward Valleroy.”²

Shortly thereafter, soon after 12 noon, at the same time that heavy thunder of cannon from Vernéville turned the attention to the right flank, the attack orders from army headquarters, dated 11.45 a.m., arrived, directing the corps toward Ste. Marie aux Chênes. As the larger part of the corps had been started in that direction, and as the enemy there was considered to be weak, the Crown Prince adhered to his measures taken, but caused the 46th Brigade to be drawn up behind the 45th Brigade at the Bois de Ponty. On the left wing the former advance guard took up the march from Labry in the valley of the Orne; to the left of the stream the 3d Battalion, 108th Rifle Regiment, started for Valleroy; on the right the 2d Battalion, followed by the 1st Heavy and 2d Light Batteries, toward Moineville. The 1st Cavalry Regiment was ahead, Captain von Treitschke with the 5th Squadron having arrived at 11 a.m. at Briey, without meeting the enemy there. At 1.30 p.m. the two leading battalions reached Valleroy and Moineville; the 1st Battalion of the Rifle Regiment and the 2d Light Battery, Beaumont. There was no sign of the enemy. At the bridge across the Orne, at Hatrize, an infantry and a pioneer company had remained. In the right rear of the advance guard the 45th Brigade with the 1st and 2d Light Batteries proceeded to Fleury behind the Bois de Ponty, the northeast edge of which as well as Batilly was already occupied by several companies. The 46th Brigade and the 1st Heavy Battery followed up to behind the northwest corner of the forest. The 24th Infantry Division crossed the Metz—Etain railroad between Jouaville and Giraumont en Jarnisy and, with the leading elements of the infantry, reached Batilly about 2.30 p.m.;³ the corps artillery went

¹Royal Saxon War Archives.—General Staff Account, p. 697.—Von Schimpff, *Das XII Corps im Kriege, 1870-71*, vol. I, p. 75. (The order, omitted here, will be found on p. 162 *ante*.)

²Royal Saxon War Archives.

³Order of march of the 24th Infantry Division:
Advance Guard—Colonel von Leonhardi.
5th Squadron, 2d Cavalry Regiment.
1st Battalion, 104th Infantry Regiment.
4th Light Battery.
2d, 3d Battalions, 104th Infantry Regiment.

Main Body:

105th Infantry Regiment.
3d Light, 3d and 4th Heavy Batteries.
12th Jäger Battalion.
2d Cavalry Regiment (less 5th Squadron).
48th Infantry Brigade.
Sanitary Detachment.
Pioneer Company with light field bridge train.

to Giraumont en Jarnisy. The 12th Cavalry Division had started from Puxe eastward when the cannon thunder was heard. There the 18th Uhlan Regiment remained with orders to continue the reconnaissance against the road beyond Briey. The 17th Uhlan Regiment was still at Villers sous Pareid.¹

Between Doncourt and Conflans the division received the orders of corps headquarters to join the corps. It hastened its march and, at 2.45 p.m., arrived at the Bois de Ponty in strength of two regiments and one battery, after General Krug von Nidda, as commander of the two detached Uhlan regiments, had been directed to send squadrons to Briey.

PRINCE FREDERICK CHARLES PROCEEDS TO VERNÉVILLE
TO THE BATTLEFIELD

At Headquarters, IId Army, when the thunder of cannon from Vernéville was heard, the issuance of orders at 12 noon was finished as rapidly as possible. After all orderly officers had been sent off, Army Headquarters, at 12.30 p.m., rode from Vionville through St. Marcel toward Vernéville, the battlefield. En route Prince Frederick Charles received the reports from the Guard and XIth Army Corps concerning the measures taken by them independently.²

These measures were so much in consonance with his last orders, that only the separate march of the 2d Guard Infantry Division to Vernéville made interference by him necessary. By direct orders from army headquarters it was sent after the 1st Guard Infantry Division to Habonville, as soon as it was seen from St. Marcel to be marching on Vernéville and when it was learned from it that it had orders to proceed there.

The reports of the two army corps contained information of the enemy which must necessarily make the Prince cautious. They stated that the enemy was at Moineville, Ste. Marie aux Chênes and St. Privat. Thus Scholl's report was confirmed. Immediately after a second confirmation arrived: the report of Captain von der Groeben concerning events at Batilly.³ There was now no longer any doubt that the enemy

¹To observe the Conflans—Etain road.

²The report from the Guard Corps read:

"From Guard Corps, Doncourt, 18. 8. 70., 11.30. According to report of Captain Groeben from the hill at Batilly dated 10.50, people just coming from Ste. Marie bring the information that French infantry is there, but especially many French troops at St. Privat la Montagne. In consequence the Guard Corps will at once start, in accordance with orders received, from Doncourt, but under these circumstances the commanding general believes it best not to march on Vernéville but on Habonville. The XIth Corps has been notified. A. B. : von Dannenberg."

Crown Prince Albert reported:

"Jarny, 18.8.70., 11.45 a.m. Enemy said to be at Moineville and Ste. Marie aux Chênes. Therefore the XIth Corps advances against these two points. Flank guard toward Valleroy. I proceed to Fleury, later on to Jouaville." War Archives.—Von der Goltz, IId Army, p. 138. (See p. 65, ante.)

The report from the Guard Corps was not complete, as the march of the 2d Guard Infantry Division toward Vernéville was not mentioned.

³Captain Groeben's report read:—"Doncourt, 18.8.70. 12 noon. A Saxon cavalry patrol has encountered French cavalry, 10 horses, at St. Ail. On the road from Amanvillers to Vernéville a few shots were fired just now. It appears that cavalry, about 2 squadrons, infantry, about 1½ companies, have been sent from St. Privat la Montagne toward Habonville and St. Ail. My advance guard platoon is halfway between Batilly and St. Ail. North of Batilly toward Ste. Marie aux Chênes is Saxon cavalry. French infantry, two companies, marching toward Ste. Marie. Between Ste. Marie and St. Privat a camp, which appears to be about being struck. Hill at Batilly, 11.30 a.m. From the Guard Corps Doncourt, 18.8.70., 12 noon. Von der Groeben, Captain."—War Archives; also von der Goltz, IId Army, p. 139.

stood north of Amanweiler; thus the IXth Army Corps, which then was in contact with the enemy, encountered not his right wing, but the hostile front. However, according to orders from Royal Headquarters of 10.30 a.m., this and the flanks were to be attacked simultaneously.

If the reported enemy was actually in the vicinity of St. Privat and was not merely a departing echelon endeavoring to save itself by going northward, the envelopment by the guard and the XIIth Army Corps would take a very long time. It is true that the IXth Army Corps had been cautioned by the last orders of 11.30 a.m. to attack earlier than the Guard Corps, yet the gradually increasing thunder of cannon aroused fear that the corps had become more deeply involved in battle than would now be desirable. To gain certainty about this the Prince rode on to Vernéville and when he arrived there, at 1.45 p.m., perceived with certainty that the IXth Army Corps was engaged in a hot battle with the enemy whose front toward the north extended to beyond Amanweiler.

GENERAL VON STEINMETZ REPORTS THE DEPARTURE OF THE
ENEMY AND PROCEEDS TO THE ATTACK

While early in the morning it was still the opinion at Headquarters, Ist Army, that the enemy stood in his position of yesterday "with strong masses of batteries and infantry",¹ army headquarters, and headquarters of the VIIth Army Corps in observation at Gravelotte, returned at 9 a.m. to the idea that the enemy wanted to avoid an attack and that his larger part was retreating on Metz. It could be seen that at Point du Jour tents were being struck and march columns being formed which in part disappeared behind the opposite hills and in part moved toward the south and northeast.²

A report received at 10.30 a.m. from the 1st Battalion, 77th Infantry Regiment, to the effect that advanced troops were at the forest of Vaux near Gravelotte agreed with these observations.³ Though the Quartermaster General of the Ist Army, Colonel Count von Wartensleben, expressed serious doubts as to the correctness of General von Steinmetz' views, a report was sent at 11.30 to Royal Headquarters that "with evident positive certainty" it might be assumed that the enemy was retreating with the greater part of his

¹In this sense General von Sperling reported to Royal Headquarters.

²On August 17th the French camped partly on the west slope of the heights, which they later defended, that is, in front of their position proper. In the forenoon of August 18th these parts were drawn back. They struck their tents, marched back behind the heights, and took their positions.

³The report read:—"On the road to Thionville, moving to the rear, enormous number of vehicle columns, field hospitals; appears to be a movement to Thionville and to Metz; stationary columns of troops, head toward Thionville, pretty close in our front, and on our right side hostile picket, just posted. 18.8.70., 10.07. B. von Vietinghoff." Rec'd 10.30 a.m.—War Archives.

force to Metz, with a smaller part toward the north and northwest.¹ General von Steinmetz was firm in his belief that the Ist Army had to reckon only with a rear guard.

As the report was sent, the chief of staff of the Ist Army, General von Sperling, returned from his ride to the King and brought the orders that the Ist Army was not to attack until the IId Army had gone farther to the front and could participate. Concerning the neighboring IXth Corps he reported that it would advance against the Genivaux forest and Vernéville, while the left wing of the IId Army was to attack from the north. Thereupon General von Steinmetz sent the following orders to the VIIIt Army Corps:

"Near Gravelotte, 18.8.80., 11.30 a.m. While the IXth Corps advances, the VIIIt Corps will take up the march and occupy the localities evacuated by the IXth Corps. The turn of the army is to be made by the corps after consulting with each other."²

The commanding general of the VIIIt Army Corps, General von Goeben, delayed the execution of these orders until the thunder of cannon coming from Vernéville assured him that the IXth Army Corps was in contact with the enemy. At 12.15 he ordered the 15th Infantry Division to advance, with one infantry brigade on Gravelotte and from there toward and to the right of the road crossing the ravine, with the other brigade left of the village to the Mance forest; the 16th Infantry Division to follow in reserve, the entire artillery of the corps to go into position north and south of the Rezonville—St. Hubert road. As soon as the troops came into view south of the Bois Leprince hostile batteries at Point du Jour and Moskau opened a sharp, but rather ineffective fire on the German masses which found cover and room for deployment in the ravine between Rezonville and Gravelotte. To balance the hostile batteries, General von Goeben caused the 1st Battalion, Foot Artillery, to go into position north of Gravelotte west of the Gravelotte—Malmaison road.³ In the meantime General von Steinmetz, believing the moment had arrived to facilitate the advance of the VIIIt Corps, issued orders to the VIIIt Army Corps to insert its batteries. The 1st Battalion, Foot Artillery, 14th Infantry Division, which stood not far from the northern exit of the deep bottom between the forest of Vaux and the Ognons forest, trotted in opened platoon column under hostile shell fire to within 200 meters of the south edge of Gravelotte, made front on the Ars—Gravelotte road and, almost simultaneously with the artillery of the VIIIt Army Corps, opened fire. Thus the battle had commenced in the Ist Army also at 12.45 p.m.

¹The report read:—"Report at Gravelotte, 18.8.70., 11.30 a.m. Though the French camp remained during the morning hours in its previous location and strength between the Bois de Genivaux and Bois de Chatel and strong columns had started out from it, apparently to occupy the former woods, the situation now has materially changed. At first it continued doubtful whether the start of troops from the camp was not for the purpose of taking up the position on the plateau between Point du Jour and Leipzig, since advanced guards and pickets still showed themselves. It can now be stated with evident positive certainty that the mass of the hostile troops is retreating in the direction of Metz, a smaller part north and northwest. A rear guard still stands on the camping ground and the enemy is keeping up a weak but continuous skirmish fire on the Bois de Vaux. The 1st Cavalry Division has been ordered to the plateau of Rezonville. Von Steinmetz."—Rec. 11.50 a.m.—War Archives.

²War Archives.

³This battalion belonged to the 15th Infantry Division.

ROYAL HEADQUARTERS UP TO THE OPENING
OF THE BATTLE

When the report from General von Steinmetz of the supposed retreat of the enemy arrived at 11.50 a.m. on the hill at Flavigny, General von Moltke naturally feared that the Ist Army would let itself be carried away to a premature attack on the enemy. At 12 noon thunder of cannon was heard coming from Vernéville, a proof that the IXth Army Corps had prematurely encountered the enemy, since the XIIth and the Guard Corps could not by then have executed the march beyond Batilly to envelop the enemy. To prevent the Ist Army from joining the advance of the IXth Army Corps, General von Moltke personally wrote the following orders to General von Steinmetz:

Hill south of Flavigny, 18 August, 1870, 12 noon. The battle now heard is merely a partial engagement in front of Vernéville and does not necessitate a general attack by the Ist Army. That army must not show strong bodies of troops, and in any event only its artillery for the preparation of the subsequent attack.¹

In spite of these orders the thunder of the Ist Army's cannons was heard at 12.45 p.m. General von Steinmetz received these orders only at 1 p.m., when the artillery battle was under way. This could not be brought into consonance with Moltke's orders; for the infantry of the VIIIth Army Corps was on its forward movement, so that as a matter of fact strong bodies of troops had been shown the enemy, and were now no longer kept back. Thus the orders arrived too late. Here, as well as in the center with the IXth Army Corps, events opened up sooner than was well for the unity of the entire action.

Royal Headquarters had received at 10.50 a.m., through Lieutenant Colonel von Brandenstein from the IId Army, the report of the Xth Army Corps that the enemy had marched the day before from Doncourt toward Metz and had left back numerous wounded. A report received from the Guard Corps at 12.10 p.m. gave the organizations to which these wounded belonged.²

At 12.05 the IId Army reported in brief the measures taken by Prince Frederick Charles and based on orders from Royal Headquarters of 10.30 a.m. for the attack.³ They were in consonance with Moltke's intentions, although the XIIth and Guard Corps, receiving Ste. Marie and Amanweiler as march directions, were given farther objectives than Batilly, which had been designated as such. In this General von Moltke may possibly have been able to perceive the effect

¹Moltke's Military Correspondence, 1870-71. No. 179.

²This report was inclosed in the report of the Guard Corps to the IId Army of 10.25 a.m. concerning the arrival at Doncourt and had been transmitted to Royal Headquarters by itself. The following French organizations were mentioned: 1st, 4th, 6th, 12th, 38d, 43d, 57th, 64th, 73d, 77th and 90th Line Regiments; 2d and 20th Jäger Battalions; 2d and 7th Hussar Regiments; the Dragoon Regiment of the Empress; 8d and 11th Dragoon Regiments; Guard Lancers Regiment; that is, in the main, troops of the 4th Corps which had fought at Bruville.

³The report read: "Orders of the IId Army. IXth Corps stopped, provided hostile right wing not in its front. Guard Corps to Amanvillers without halt to envelop right flank. XIIth to Ste. Marie aux Chênes. IId to Rezonville. Xth to Amanvillers as a reserve (incorrect, it had been ordered to St. Ail). IIIId to Caulre-Vernéville; Prince at head of IIIId Corps, 12.05."—War Archives.

of the reports, received by him at 12.10 p.m., from the IXth Army Corps and from Lieutenant Scholl as to the presence of hostile troops north of Jouaville and at St. Privat la Montagne. But these reports received as little attention at Royal Headquarters as they had received at army headquarters. The IXth Corps had not reported anything of the enemy north of Amanweiler, and it was not to be assumed that it would have opened battle if it had seen itself threatened from that side. The general attention was drawn to the increasing thunder of cannon. In order to be closer to the events taking their course in front, the King desired to change his location; but General von Moltke begged him not to do so, in order that the receipt of reports might not be delayed. But, after the artillery of the Ist Army had also taken up the battle, the noise of the latter became so strong that the King could no longer remain contented at Flavigny. It was decided to ride ahead to the hill south of Rezonville. At 1.45 p.m., shortly before starting, the following report from Lieutenant Colonel von Brandenstein was received concerning events with the IId Army:

“Hill north of St. Marcel, 1 p.m.

“His Royal Highness rides to the IXth Army Corps. The Guard Corps proceeds with both divisions to the Bois Doseuillons and at 1 p.m. is opposite St. Marcel. The XIIth Corps is a little to the left rear.”¹

This report was correct as far as concerned conditions with the Guard Corps at that moment, but could give an erroneous impression. It was not the Bois Doseuillons which was the objective of the Guard Corps, but Habonville for the 1st Division, Vernéville for the 2d Division. As this report was being sent the 2d Division was also directed to proceed to Habonville. As General von Moltke must deduce that the Guard Corps was taking position behind, not alongside of, the IXth Army Corps—which latter he knew to be in battle at Vernéville—the execution of his attack order of 10.30 a.m. appeared endangered, the more so because now the Ist Army also had encountered the enemy sooner than was expected. Consequently he sent the following orders to the IId Army by Captain von Winterfeld:

“Hill south Flavigny, 18 August, 1870, 1.45 p.m.

“The IXth Army Corps is already engaged in artillery battle in front of the Bois Doseuillons. The actual general attack along the entire line will not be made until important fighting forces can come up from Amanvillers.”²

This shows that the hostile right wing was still assumed to be south of Amanweiler.

Royal Headquarters then proceeded to the hill south of Rezonville, from which the artillery battle of the Ist Army could be viewed.

¹ War Archives.

² Moltke's Military Correspondence, 1870-71; No. 180.

IV. The Second Army Up to 5 p.m.

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THE 25TH INFANTRY DIVISION AND THE 1ST GUARD INFANTRY
DIVISION MARCH ON HABONVILLE

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Simultaneously with the arrival of the 25th Infantry Division at Habonville from the south, the 1st Guard Infantry Division arrived there from the west. In pursuance of the verbal orders brought by the chief of staff of the Guard Corps "to advance with the division via Anoux la Grange and Habonville on Amanvillers," General von Pape had again started from Doncourt. To the north of his march direction was the Guard Hussar Regiment in permanent connection with the XIIth Army Corps. After the squadron under Captain von der Groeben had rejoined, the regiment stood in the ravine west of St. Ail and continued the reconnaissance toward Ste Marie aux Chênes, St. Privat la Montagne and Auboué. Some of the reports of the results of this reconnaissance reached the 1st Guard Infantry Division while it was starting from Doncourt and proved conclusively the presence of hostile forces at St. Privat and Ste. Marie.¹ Numerous written and verbal reports from the Guard Hussars were also received by the commanders later on and kept them informed of all important events with the enemy and with the XIIth Army Corps.

In the start the advance guard of the 1st Guard Infantry Division utilized for its advance the low ground south of the Metz—Etain railroad and, north of Anoux la Grange, entered the artillery fire zone from the heights southwest of St. Privat.

General von Pape and his staff had ridden ahead of it to the hill south of Habonville² to gain a view of the probable battlefield. He knew from the reports of the Guard Hussars that the enemy was at Ste. Marie aux Chênes and at St. Privat la Montagne. He could himself now count at the latter place about 20 battalions and could see, in position on the heights west and south of the village, numerous batteries which surrounded the left wing of the IXth Army Corps on a large arc. The Hessian Division became discernible between the clumps of

¹ The reports read:

1. "Have already searched Habonville; French cavalry has been there but fell back. Shall send patrols toward Amanvillers. On my left the Saxons have received fire. In front of Batilly, 11.30 a.m. Von Rundstedt, Lieut."

On the back of this message blank: "After thorough examination through field glasses at least one French division bivouacks between Ste. Marie and St. Privat. Hill at Batilly, 11.50. Count Groeben, Capt."--War Archives.

2. "Hill at Batilly, 12.15 p.m. For past 15 minutes heavy infantry and artillery fire, also in the Bois de la Cusse. Count Groeben, Capt."

3. "Habonville, 12.30. Hostile columns, one division, deploying at St. Privat. von Hymmen, Lt-Col."

4. "Hill near Batilly, 12.45. Troops from camp at Roncourt and St. Privat march on Ste. Marie aux Chênes, also on Vernéville. I see two battalions in both directions, about 4 squadrons. Count Groeben, Capt."--Reports 2, 3, and 4 from posthumous papers of General von Pape.

²The location of General von Pape, Hill 306, 700 meters south of Habonville, offered a complete view to far beyond St. Privat and Ste. Marie.

woods south of Habonville, while other parts of the IXth Army Corps appeared to be engaged in a hot battle farther southeast. The Hessian cavalry brigade also was seen when, pursued by the hostile shell fire, it retreated on Anoux la Grange. Under these conditions it was clear to the general that he could not continue his march on Amanweiler, during which he would offer his flank and rear to the enemy at St. Privat. The decision must of necessity lie on the heights of St. Privat—as in 1866 at Chlum—and, concluding that the 2d Guard Infantry Division was following him and that the Saxon corps was being brought up from Jarny, he decided to march to the left, leaving Habonville on the west as also St. Ail and Ste. Marie aux Chênes, and to proceed to Auboué, Montois, and Malancourt and from there attack the position of St. Privat in flank and rear.¹ To cover the march to the left on Auboué and to support the 25th Infantry Division, which appeared to suffer under the hostile artillery fire and had brought up no artillery of its own as yet, the 1st Battalion of artillery under Lieut. Colonel Bychelberg was brought up into position on the ridge between the Bois de la Cusse and Habonville.² The advance guard was directed to turn off toward Habonville, to occupy that place for protection of the artillery with its leading battalion and to continue the advance in the ravine west of St. Ail to Auboué. The Guard Hussar Regiment was directed to protect the march to the left of the 1st Guard Infantry Division in the left front. The division adjutant, Major Count zu Ysenburg, carried the information of the arrival of the division to Headquarters, IXth Army Corps.

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HEADQUARTERS OF THE SECOND ARMY ARRIVES ON THE BATTLEFIELD

After Headquarters of the IIId Army had arrived west of Vernéville at 1.45 p.m., an officer of the staff rode around the village and ascertained that French batteries were engaged north of Amanweiler; the further view was cut off by the Bois de la Cusse. Prince Frederick Charles, who rode ahead as far as the southeast corner of the village, gained the impression that the battle of the IXth Army Corps swayed from first one side to the other, undecided. He consequently considered it necessary to bring up the corps of artillery of the IIIId Army Corps, the reserve army artillery.³ On the whole the situation of the

¹Posthumous papers of General von Pape.

²The first shot of the advance guard battery (1st Light) was directed at 12.45 p.m. against the French batteries southwest of St. Privat. Shortly after the 2d Heavy Battery went into position on its right, the 1st Heavy and the 2d Light Battery on its left. Because of losses on the way the 2d Heavy Battery could put but five guns in action.

³The IIIId Army Corps had been sent to Vernéville by verbal orders from the Prince. The commanding general had ordered the corps artillery, followed by the 6th Infantry Division, to proceed from Vionville through St. Marcel and Caulre to Vernéville; the 6th Cavalry Division, followed by the 5th Infantry Division, to march from Tronville through Bruville and Urcourt to Anoux la Grange. But as the corps artillery when starting was still occupied in breaking in new animals, it requested permission to follow behind the 6th Infantry Division.

battle was considered favorable. There were now superior forces assembled, or coming up, against an enemy who on August 16th could not defeat two army corps, and whose intentions—to which he apparently had held fast up to the last moment—to avoid a German attack, had been crossed.¹ Conditions with the enemy were entirely different from what they were believed to be at Royal Headquarters and, until lately, at IId Army Headquarters. An envelopment of the enemy at Amanweiler was no longer considered. The decisive point was farther north, probably in the vicinity of St. Privat la Montagne and, as there the decision could be brought about only later on, care had to be taken in the meantime that the IXth Army Corps, which encountered the enemy prematurely, was not singly beaten. The Guard Corps received orders at 2 p.m.² to start the corps artillery and send it into position alongside the artillery of the IXth Corps. A few minutes later the Xth Army Corps, which had reported its arrival at Jouaville, received orders to continue the directed march on St. Ail and to bring its corps artillery to the front.³ After these orders were executed, there could be no more danger to the IXth Army Corps. Shortly after 2 p.m. the Prince proceeded by way of Anoux la Grange to the western vicinity of Habonville.⁴

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THE ADVANCE OF THE FIRST GUARD INFANTRY DIVISION FROM
HABONVILLE ON AUBOUÉ COMES TO A STAND IN FRONT
OF STE. MARIE—THE GUARD ARTILLERY ENTERS
THE BATTLE.

When General von Pape decided to march with the 1st Guard Infantry Division from Habonville to Auboué, he sent information to Headquarters of the Guard Corps as to the situation, his decision, and the commencement of the execution thereof. After the resumption of the march the commanding general had proceeded from Doncourt to west of Habonville where he could view the situation of the IXth Army Corps and the position of the French 6th Corps as could General von Pape from south of Habonville. He next decided to bring up the 2d Guard Infantry Division, which he supposed about at St. Marcel on the march to Vernéville,⁵ in obedience to his last orders issued at Doncourt, and sent it orders to take a more northerly direction in its subsequent advance. When he turned his attention to the 1st Guard In-

¹The reports of Captain von Groeben of the events at Batilly corresponded with this view.

²War Archives.

³War Archives.

⁴At Vernéville Prince Frederick Charles received a report from Captain von Bergen who had been sent to Gravelotte for observation, to the effect that the VIIth Army Corps had entered the battle with its artillery at 12.25 p.m. against the enemy opposite Gravelotte. (War Archives). The time, 12.25 p.m., is not correct, as fire was opened in the 1st Army only at 12.45 p.m.

⁵As a matter of fact that division was already marching on Habonville in obedience to orders from Prince Frederick Charles.

fantry Division at Habonville, he saw its artillery going into position south of the railroad cut at Habonville. On recommendation of the commander of the Guard Artillery, General Prince zu Hohenlohe, he directed the corps artillery to join the artillery of the 1st Guard Division in the battle against the enemy at St. Privat. The Guard Cavalry Division¹ received orders to secure the left flank of the Guard Infantry Division.

Prince August of Württemberg by bringing up the corps artillery anticipated the subsequent orders of Prince Frederick Charles to the same effect. The commander of the corps artillery, Colonel von Scherbening, had also taken measures in advance of the commanding general's directions.

Called to the front by the thunder of cannon of the IXth Army Corps, he saw from Jouaville the hostile artillery positions at St. Privat and hurriedly brought his batteries to the head of the main body of the 1st Guard Infantry Division. Thus the corps artillery was at hand. Although there had been added to the orders of corps headquarters that the Metz—Etain railroad south of Habonville should be crossed only when one battalion could secure the left wing, Colonel von Scherbening, when he saw the artillery of the 1st Guard Infantry Division again limbering up and continuing toward the village, caused the march to be continued the other side of the railroad. The 4th and 3d Heavy and the 2d Light Batteries crossed the railroad on the Jouaville—Habonville road, followed by the 3d and 4th Light Batteries, which had unlimbered south of the railroad but had not fired. The artillery of the 1st Guard Infantry Division again went into position north of Habonville west of the road to St. Ail, while on its left the batteries of the corps artillery commenced to go into position.² Farther south, at the Bois de la Cusse, Hessian batteries were seen making a change of position to the front. Thus strong German artillery was being deployed on both sides of the Metz—Etain railroad.³

Colonel von Scherbening had hastened ahead of his batteries to St. Ail. Close to that village he encountered Lieutenant von Esbeck, called von Platen, of the Guard Hussar Regiment, orderly officer at 1st Guard Infantry Division Headquarters, who pointed out to him the dangerous proximity of hostile infantry.⁴ Colonel von Scherbening

¹Present, the 1st and 3d Guard Cavalry Brigades with two horse batteries.

²From right to left: 2d Light, 1st Light, 2d Heavy, 1st Heavy, 3d Heavy, 4th Heavy, 3d Light, 2d Horse, 4th Light.

³The terrain offered great difficulties to the movements of the Guard batteries. The deep railroad cuts were enclosed with wire fences which had to be cut by the cannoneers with their sabers; the slopes were so steep that the other side of the cuts had to be taken at the gallop. The ravine northwest of Habonville, which also had to be crossed, was steep and deep, the bottom marshy; the horses could get through only with the greatest of efforts. As the movements, especially that of the divisional artillery, offered the flank to the enemy, the hostile fire caused large losses. Three pieces and one caisson were left lying behind and were brought up only later on.

⁴At the arrival of Division Headquarters south of Habonville Lieutenant von Esbeck, called von Platen, had ridden ahead toward Ste. Marie aux Chênes and seen "how everything between St. Privat, Roncourt and Ste. Marie was full of the enemy." On his return he was heavily fired on from southwest of St. Privat by advanced troops whose leading line had come to within 800 meters of the Habonville--Ste. Marie road. He rendered an exhaustive report of his observations to Colonel von Scherbening and later on to the division commander.—Report of, at that time, Lieutenant von Esbeck, called von Platen.

himself now perceived the apparently strong garrison of Ste. Marie and, north of St. Ail and in the direction of St. Privat, hostile skirmishers, who, hidden in the folds of the terrain, hardly 800 or 1,000 meters distant, appeared to be in readiness to receive the unsuspecting batteries, coming up devoid of infantry protection, with a sudden and surprising fire. He estimated this advanced hostile infantry at three battalions. He succeeded in holding back the left wing of the corps artillery from going into position south of St. Ail, and forbade any further advance until Ste. Marie should be in possession of German infantry.

The advance guard of the 1st Guard Infantry Division, which had crossed the railroad south of Habonville simultaneously with the divisional artillery, had occupied Habonville with the 1st Battalion of the Guard Fusilier Regiment. The 2d and 3d Battalions of this regiment and the Guard Jäger Battalion branched off into the ravine leading to Auboué. The main body of the division deployed its brigades in battle lines as soon as they arrived in the fire zone southwest of Habonville and marched with the leading brigade to the left, the rear brigade to the right around the small woods north of Anoux la Grange. When the brigades of the main body perceived the advance guard moving from Habonville to the left into the ravine, they also moved to the left, to shorten the road and closed up on the advance guard at the ravine west of Habonville. From there they followed it without distance, the battalions facing to the left about and descending into the ravine.¹

In the meantime General von Pape had ridden ahead of the advance guard to St. Ail and had gained the conviction that a march of his division to Auboué close by Ste. Marie aux Chênes was impossible. Ste. Marie must first be taken.²

The advance guard commander, Colonel von Eckert of the Guard Fusilier Regiment, received orders, therefore, to deploy the advance guard, just then arriving behind the Guard batteries going into position southwest of St. Ail against Ste. Marie aux Chênes. One house of the village, to be seen from far off, was designated as point of direction. The Guard Jäger Battalion, with the 2d Battalion, Guard Fusilier Regiment on its right, took the assigned direction, the 3d Battalion following.

At this moment, just as the last battery of the corps artillery unlimbered south of St. Ail, General von Pape personally perceived French Infantry, about one battalion³, starting from Ste. Marie southward and charging at a run toward St. Ail. He immediately threw the battalion nearest at hand, the 3d Guard Fusilier Regiment, against it and this battalion succeeded in getting into St. Ail a few minutes ahead of the enemy and driving him back after a short

¹This ravine offered excellent cover. In spite of heavy fire received during the entire march, the losses were comparatively small. Advance guard and main body lost only about six men per battalion.

²At St. Ail General von Pape met the chief of staff of the Guard Corps, General von Dannenberg, who declared himself satisfied with the intentions of the division but pointed out at that time that Ste. Marie was not to be attacked before the arrival of the Saxons.

³One company, according to French reports.

engagement.¹ After the village had been searched, the 9th and 12th Companies occupied the east and north edge, the other two companies remained in reserve. At 2 p.m. the regulation occupation had been completed and thus the left wing of the Guard artillery was secure.

In the meantime Colonel von Erckert had marched with the remaining two battalions of the advance guard along the edge of the ravine—the country southwest of St. Ail being swept by a very hot fire—as far as the valley-like opening formed by a neighboring ravine running into it from St. Ail, and there deployed the battalions for battle.

The 2d Battalion of the Guard Fusilier Regiment deployed with its right flank at the Waschhaus 200 meters northwest of St. Ail with the Guard Jäger Battalion on its left at the small wood north of the fork in the valley. As both battalions while deploying were hotly fired on from Ste. Marie at ranges which precluded replying to that fire, the skirmishers proceeded farther to the front. The closed up units followed.

In the meantime a heavy artillery battle was waged by the Guard batteries south of St. Ail. Here General zu Hohenlohe commanded the united divisional and corps artillery, the latter having bent back its left wing a little toward Ste. Marie. In the start the hostile artillery in position immediately south of St. Privat and that west of it were engaged², and, within a very short time, the two heavy batteries of the 1st Foot Battalion succeeded in silencing a French battery on the St. Privat—Ste. Marie road the fire of which had been especially galling to the Guard batteries when going into position.

West of the artillery, on the south edge of the wood north of Batilly, stood the Guard Hussar regiment which had evacuated the defile west of St. Ail when the Guard Fusilier Regiment came up. Later on the 1st and 3d Guard Cavalry Brigades with two horse batteries took position behind the Guard Hussar Regiment.³

HEADQUARTERS SECOND ARMY AT HABONVILLE

Toward 2.15 p.m. Prince Frederick Charles arrived in the western neighborhood of Habonville, taking position about 500 meters south of the railroad guard house west of the village, where he had now a good view of the connection and extension of the hostile position as far as St. Privat as well as of the strength of that position. The tasks set the wing corps were found to necessitate a change. The Guard and the IXth Corps had to attack the enemy in the front, while the XIIth

¹Only a few men of the French 94th Line Regiment reached St. Ail; the mass faced about, apparently by higher orders. In St. Ail a few prisoners were taken belonging to the 4th Line Regiment which probably had remained there since the evening before.

²Five batteries, which alone replied to the fire of the Guard artillery. The remainder of the hostile batteries south of St. Privat—Ste. Marie road fired against the left wing of the IXth Army Corps at the Bois de la Cusse.

³The 3d Guard Cavalry Brigade (Guard Dragoons) had been organized into four squadrons since August 16th.

Army Corps remained available for enveloping the hostile right wing, the III^d and Xth Corps being in the second line as reserve. A report from the Guard Corps received by army headquarters on its arrival showed the situation of the German left wing.¹

* * *

Thus the repeatedly reported fact that Ste. Marie was held by the enemy was confirmed. This village could not well be seen from the location of army headquarters, being about in line with, and hidden by, St. Ail, the two appearing as one village. It was clear that Ste. Marie must be taken before an attack against the heights of St. Privat could be thought of.

A little later, at 2.30 p.m., Captain von Winterfeld of the general staff of Royal Headquarters, brought the information from General von Moltke, sent off at 1.45 p.m., to the effect that the IXth Army Corps was already engaged in an artillery battle and that no decisive general attack would be made along the entire line until material fighting forces could advance from Amanweiler.

The Prince saw from this information that Royal Headquarters was still wrongly informed concerning the enemy; but on the other hand the intention of Royal Headquarters to await the envelopment of the French right wing was evident. It is true that no waiting action could now be prescribed the IXth Army Corps, which was not conducting an artillery battle as Moltke believed, but a hot infantry fight. The Guard Corps, however, could be ordered to wait; for the largest part of its infantry had not yet become engaged. Therefore the Prince sent Lieutenant von Maltzahn, adjutant of army headquarters, with orders to Guard Corps Headquarters to carry on the battle only with artillery and to delay the general infantry battle until the XIIth Army Corps could effectively participate. In the meantime Prince August of Württemberg himself had ridden up to the commander-in-chief of the II^d Army and stated to him that, considering the material strength of the enemy, he also intended to carry on the battle only with artillery, as only one brigade of Saxons² had so far arrived at Batilly, the remainder of the XIIth Army Corps still being far in rear. Prince Frederick Charles declared himself satisfied with this, discussed with the Prince the situation and the intentions of Royal Headquarters, and at 2.45 p.m. sent Captain von Winterfeld, after having oriented him thoroughly, back to General von Moltke with the report that the advancing Saxons were moving on Ste. Marie aux Chênes and that he thought of commencing the attack at about 3.45 p.m., so as to give the Saxons a little rest first. The main point now was to inform the Saxons as quickly as possible. For some time batteries which could belong only to the XIIth Army Corps had been seen in position southwest of Ste. Marie aux Chênes firing on that

¹ War Archives; also von der Goltz, *II^d Armee*, p. 142. (The report omitted above will be found on p. 69 *ante*.)

² 47th Infantry Brigade.

village. There was no absolute certainty as to whether or not troops of the Guard Corps had already entered Ste. Marie and were now being fired on by the Saxon artillery. Therefore three officers of army headquarters¹ were sent, one after the other, to the XIIth Army Corps to inform them of conditions with the Guard Corps and to prevent the Saxon artillery from firing on a wrong target.²

At 3:00 p.m the following message was received from the Crown Prince of Saxony:

"Sent, Batilly, 18 August, 2:30 p.m. The Saxon Army Corps advances with the 24th Infantry Division on Ste. Marie aux Chênes and with the 23d Infantry Division, proceeding via Coinville and the small wood situated between there and Roncourt, envelops the French right wing."³

Thus the battle developed in the manner planned by Prince Frederick Charles and—even if under other assumptions—by Royal Headquarters. The envelopment of the French right wing—St. Privat having been perceived to be its main point of support—and the capture of the advanced position at Ste. Marie aux Chênes appeared secured; though of course the enveloping march of the Saxons, according to the Crown Prince's report, must take more time than Prince Frederick Charles had at first assumed.

THE 1ST GUARD INFANTRY DIVISION PREPARES FOR ATTACK ON STE. MARIE

After Prince August of Württemberg had taken his leave of Prince Frederick Charles he proceeded past the railroad guard's house west of Habonville to the ridge north of the railroad, taking his position there, and he then ordered General von Pape "not to continue the march farther to the north, but to form the division against Ste. Marie, and not to attack that place in earnest before the arrival of the expected Saxon corps."⁴ Thereupon General von Pape directed his advance guard not to undertake an attack for the present.

After these orders had been sent off the general endeavored to bring up his divisional artillery to fire on Ste. Marie, but to repeated requests to General Prince zu Hohenlohe received the answer that the artillery could not be spared from its position south of St. Ail. Colonel von Erckert was directed to deploy the 3d Battalion, Guard Fusilier Regiment, which had remained in St. Ail, against Ste. Marie aux Chênes, and received permission to bring up also the 1st Battalion from Habonville, as Hessian troops were now in that vicinity. The main body of the 1st Guard Infantry Division effected its deployment behind the left wing of the advance guard in the ravine west of St. Ail

¹ Lieutenant von Normann, personal aid of the Prince; Captain Steffen of the general staff, IId Army, and Major von Werder, staff officer and aid of the commander of the artillery, IId Army.

² War Archives.

³ War Archives; also von der Goltz, *II. Armee*, p. 143. (See p. 69, *ante*.)

⁴ Posthumous papers of General von Pape.

in such manner that both brigades were close behind each other. On receipt of a report from the Guard Hussar Regiment that French infantry was apparently advancing from north of Ste. Marie to envelop the left wing of the Guard Jäger Battalion,¹ the 2d Guard Infantry Brigade, in the lead, prolonged the line of the Guard Jägers toward the left with two companies of the first arriving Fusilier Battalion of the 4th Guard Regiment. Very soon, however, these movements of the enemy were seen to be counter measures against the XIIth Corps, whose columns became visible east of Moineville and at the Bois de Ponty.

THE XIIth ARMY CORPS ARRIVES AT STE. MARIE

After Crown Prince Albert of Saxony had issued orders for the continuation of the march of his army corps from Jarny to Ste. Marie aux Chênes and Moineville, he rode ahead toward Batilly. When crossing the railroad between Giraumont en Jarnisy and Jouaville behind the advance guard of the 24th Infantry Division, he was joined by Major von Meyerinck of the Guard Hussar Regiment who reported the situation of the Guard Corps and called attention to the fact that the Saxon troops would enter the fire zone of the enemy when getting east of Batilly.² The Crown Prince proceeded to Hill 265³ between Jouaville and Batilly and there viewed the heights of St. Privat where dense powder smoke indicated the location of the hostile positions. Reports from the advance guard cavalry of both Saxon infantry divisions and those from the Guard Hussars, which reconnoitered along the entire front of the XIIth Army Corps, stated that the hostile position extended in the north to beyond St. Privat and that Roncourt also was occupied. These reports were supplemented by a verbal report from Captain von der Planitz, of the Saxon General Staff, who had reconnoitered at 12.30 p.m. from Ste. Marie (which was then still unoccupied) and who was able to report definitely concerning the frontal strength of the St. Privat position. The Crown Prince, following that report with his eyes on the map, said: "In that case we shall not attack in front, but go around," and made a corresponding movement with his left arm.⁴ While ways and means were still being discussed, two additional important reports arrived. The advance guard of the 23d Infantry Division reported that both banks of the Orne and Briey were free of the enemy. Captain von Hodenberg, of the Saxon General Staff, who had been sent for orientation to the 23d Infantry Division, brought the following report which had been dictated to him by a general staff officer of that division:

¹War Archives.

²Major von Meyerinck had been sent by General von Pape to the Saxons. The Crown Prince asked him how much of the Guard was already engaged, and, as the major answered that, when he was leaving, the artillery of the 1st Guard Infantry Division had just gone into position, he said to his suite: "See, now, the artillery is just starting in; we have come just in time."—Report (at that time) Major von Meyerinck.

³Cf. page 165, *ante*.

⁴Von Schlimff, *Das XII. Korps im Kriege 1870-71*, Vol. 1, pp. 79-80. (P. 166, *ante*.)

"Sent, 18 August, 1.40 p.m. A battle rages in and on the other side of the forest southeast of Vernéville and in Vernéville itself. A French camp, at least one division, is at St. Privat la Montagne and Roncourt. Inhabitants state that there is no enemy at Auboué and that weak infantry detachments are between Batilly and Ste. Marie aux Chênes. 1st Prussian Guard Division at 12 noon from Doncourt to Anoux la Grange. French troops in the tent camp at St. Privat and Roncourt are marching to the battle at Vernéville.—Information from the advance guard of the Guard Hussars."¹

Captain von Hodenberg added to this that the commander of the 23d Infantry Division, Prince George of Saxony, would proceed with his staff toward Ste. Marie.²

At 2 p.m. Prince Albert issued the following orders:

"1. The 1st Division (23d), which will now again have the disposition of the 2d Brigade (46th) in position behind the west corner of the Bois de Ponty, will take direction by way of Coinville through the small wood east of Auboué and advance against the position at Roncourt.

"2. To the 46th Brigade at Giraumont. The 2d Infantry Brigade (46th) will immediately march to the west corner of the Bois de Ponty.

"3. The corps artillery will follow the 24th Division from Giraumont.

"4. The 2d Division (24th) will go around Batilly on the west, thence proceed behind the small wood in the hollow toward Ste. Marie aux Chênes and attempt from there to advance directly on Ste. Marie aux Chênes. The 4th Brigade (48th) will be left behind the small wood of Batilly at the disposition of the commanding general."³

These measures were reported to army headquarters at 2.30 p.m., two copies being sent;⁴ the Guard Corps was also notified.⁵ Headquarters of the XIIth Army Corps then continued toward Batilly.

After the orders of the Crown Prince had been received, Prince George of Saxony took the necessary measures to assemble, south of Auboué at Coinville, the troops of the 23d Infantry Division, distributed from Batilly to Valleroy. Before the advance guard could be notified, its commander, General von Craushaar, knowing that the valley of the Orne and Briey were clear of the enemy and that Ste. Marie was in hostile hands, had independently decided to advance in the direction of the latter. At 2 p.m. the 2d Battalion, 108th Rifle Regiment, was started from Moineville, the 3d Battalion from Valleroy through Serry toward Ste. Marie; the 1st Battalion was to follow in reserve with the 2d Light Battery from Beaumont. The 1st Cavalry Regiment received orders to reconnoiter toward the thicket north of Ste. Marie aux Chênes and to cover the left flank. Report of these measures was rendered to the division commander. Toward 3 p.m. the leading battalions

¹Royal Saxon War Archives.

²The 23d Infantry Division had up to then had the Bois de Ponty as march objective; its advance guard Moineville.

³Royal Saxon War Archives.

⁴Both copies arrived at army headquarters at 8 p.m.

⁵The adjutant of the Guard Corps, Lieutenant von Ramm, had been at XIIth Corps Headquarters as information officer since noon; the adjutant of the XIIth Corps, Captain von Minckwitz, was on the same duty at the Guard Corps also since noon; each one had four mounted messengers.

crossed the ravine of Auboué, south of Coinville, under a heavy fire of the French batteries at St. Privat, to deploy against the north side of Ste. Marie aux Chênes.

When the 46th Infantry Brigade had reached the west side of the Bois de Ponty it received, at 2.45 p.m., through an error in issuing orders, directions to march to Moineville instead of to Coinville and it turned in that direction by way of Beaumont, arriving there at 3.15 p.m. and halting there.¹ Thus it reached a point more than two kilometers from Coinville where Prince George intended to assemble his troops.

Because of the distance between its several parts the 45th Infantry Brigade could not start the march immediately. The 100th Grenadier Regiment had been distributed, when occupying the Bois de Ponty, along the entire stretch from Batilly to the northwest corner of the forest; the 101st Grenadier Regiment and the 1st Light and 2d Heavy Batteries were in reserve along the south side of the forest. Those parts at the south corner of the forest had been started on the march before arrival of corps orders.² They went around the difficult Bois de Ponty on the northeast, keeping a northeasterly direction, and descended into the ravine of Auboué northwest of Ste. Marie aux Chênes. The remaining troops followed them by battalions and companies.

The 24th Infantry Division, which in the meantime had sent the three batteries of the main body ahead to the advance guard under guard of the 2d Cavalry Regiment, received the corps orders for advancing on Ste. Marie aux Chênes just when its advance guard had arrived east of Batilly,³ and it then descended into the ravine of Auboué north of the 1st Guard Infantry Division, where now the entire 47th Infantry Brigade deployed for the attack opposite the west side of Ste. Marie aux Chênes.⁴ The 48th Infantry Division, kept at the disposition of corps headquarters, deployed behind the small wood north of Batilly, where the 2d Cavalry Regiment also found room alongside the Guard Hussar Regiment. The Guard and the 3d Cavalry Regiments of the 12th Cavalry Division, as well as the 1st Horse Battery, awaited further orders west of the Bois de Ponty.⁵

The movements of the XIIth Army Corps in obedience to corps orders of 2 p.m. produced a right turn from the line Batilly—Bois de Ponty toward the ravine south of Auboué. Through this turn two infantry brigades came up to the ravine; the 47th about 2.50 p.m. north of the 1st Guard Infantry Division; the 45th about half an hour later in

¹The orders read: "2.45 p.m. To Colonel von Montbé. Your brigade comes now again under orders of the division commander and will take direction on Moineville going to the left past the reserve artillery. Schubert, Lt.-Col."

²In execution of the division commander's independent decision to continue the march on Ste. Marie aux Chênes.

³The orders to go around Batilly on the west could not be executed by the advance guard.—Royal Saxon War Archives.

⁴About this time the 45th Infantry Brigade passed behind the 47th, to reach the ravine farther to the north.—Von Schimpff, *Das XII. Korps im Kriege 1870-71*, page 91, Vol. I (see page 174, ante).

⁵The Uhlan regiments remained until the 19th of August at Villers sous Pareid and Puxe.

the vicinity of Coinville. The other two infantry brigades, far separated from their sister brigades, remained for the present in two lines, the 46th at Moineville, the 48th at the small wood north of Batilly. Independent of these movements the former advance guard of the 23d Infantry Division, the 108th Rifle Regiment, marched at right angles through this right turn from Moineville eastward to northwest of Ste. Marie aux Chênes.

THE ATTACK ON STE. MARIE AUX CHÊNES IS PREPARED
BY THE ARTILLERY.

During the movements of the infantry the entire corps and divisional artillery of the XIIth Army Corps went into position against Ste. Marie aux Chênes, except the 1st Heavy Battery, which followed the 46th Infantry Brigade to Moineville. At first the 4th Light Battery went into position, having followed the leading battalion of the advance guard of the 24th Infantry Division, crossed the ravine of Auboué west of St. Ail and unlimbered northwest of that village behind the center of the artillery line of the 1st Guard Infantry Division. General von Pape rode to meet this battery and requested it to open fire on Ste. Marie.¹ Later on the 3d and 4th Heavy Batteries went into position on its left. The last battery of the 24th Infantry Division, the 3d Light, remained in the ravine of Auboué, northwest of St. Ail, in reserve, as it found no suitable position for opening fire.

Going into position was achieved under hostile infantry and artillery fire. The fire of the batteries, however, very soon had good effect against the south front of Ste. Marie aux Chênes. The very first shot of the 4th Heavy Battery made a breach in a long garden wall which was strongly occupied by the French, and caused that garrison to retire. Thereafter the battery, in conjunction with the 3d Heavy Battery, turned its fire mainly against the stone walls and on to the southwest corner of the village, from where the batteries were heavily fired on. In a short time a part of these walls was in ruins and evacuated by the French.

The seven batteries of the corps artillery had advanced from their positions in readiness at Giraumont en Jarnisy through Batilly to Auboué and, north of the small wood of Batilly on the Batilly—Auboué road, they made a turn by batteries against Ste. Marie aux Chênes. Soon after 2.30 p.m. the 6th Heavy Battery, arriving first, opened fire. The next two batteries, the 5th Heavy and 5th Light, unlimbered as the infantry formed for the charge but fired from 30 to 40 rounds against the village garrison. The succeeding batteries, the 6th Light, 8th and 7th Heavy, turned their fire partly on the village, partly on the French troops visible opposite in the direction of St. Privat la Montagne, while the 2d Horse Battery, the last to go into position on the left wing, shortly before 3 p.m., fired mainly on the infantry northeast of Ste. Marie aux Chênes.

¹Posthumous papers of General von Pape.—Royal Saxon War Archives.

Of the 23d Infantry Division, the 1st Light Battery had already unlimbered just where the corps artillery stood later on, but when the latter came up went across the ravine of Auboué and took a new position on the left of the batteries of the 24th Division. The 2d Heavy and the 2d Light Battery, the latter of which had come up with the 108th Rifle Regiment from Beaumont, also went into action north of the corps artillery, but ceased fire shortly after when the infantry was led to the attack. The batteries received orders to join the infantry of the 23d Infantry Division and, with exception of the 2d Light Battery, moved towards Coinville.

Of the Guard artillery south of St. Ail the two batteries on the left wing¹ directed their fire against Ste. Marie aux Chênes on the urgent request of General von Pape and by orders of Prince zu Hohenlohe. The target, however, being hard to discern, the effect was not great.² This had not escaped the observation of General von Pape; and therefore his joy was great when the Saxon batteries arrived, for he considered the artillery effect absolutely necessary for preparation of the final charge.³ When he saw this preparation secured he sought out the commander of the 24th Infantry Division, General Nehrhoff, and decided with him as to the general attack on Ste. Marie. The Saxon Infantry was to attack the northwest front and the Guard Infantry the southwest front of the village; but the Guard was to wait until the artillery had produced sufficient effect and until the Saxon infantry was deployed. General von Pape himself was to give the signal for the attack.⁴

The nine Guard batteries had successfully continued their battle against the five batteries of the French 6th Corps in the vicinity of St. Privat, although those batteries had the advantage of a higher, well covered position and had fired on the batteries coming up without interference. The Guard batteries in addition suffered much from infantry fire, their losses through which were larger than through artillery fire. They were of course protected on the left flank after St. Ail had been occupied by the 1st Guard Infantry Division; but in front, unprotected by infantry, the batteries had to contend permanently with hostile skirmishers in the folds of the terrain. In spite of this they directed their fire mainly against the hostile batteries and, at about 3 p.m., the fire superiority commenced to make itself so much felt that the hostile artillery in position on the St. Privat—Ste. Marie road had to seek positions more in the rear, some turning back toward

¹A total of 10 pieces: the 4th Light and two platoons of the 2d Horse Battery.

²War Archives.

³Posthumous papers of General von Pape.

⁴In his papers General von Pape stated: "Toward 2.45 p.m. I saw the Saxon division commander, General von Nehrhoff, coming up. It at once occurred to me that it would be well from a military and from a political standpoint to engage in a serious and presumably favorable battle in conjunction with our allies, although I was certain that I could carry the fight myself to an end with the advance guard supported by a few battalions. I rode to General von Nehrhoff, who was well known to me, greeted him and disclosed my intentions to which he at once acceded. We agreed that he was to attack the northwest I the southwest front of Ste. Marie, I to wait until he had deployed his troops against that village, and then I to give the signal for the attack."

Roncourt and some moving closer to the edge of the village of St. Privat.¹ It thus gave the Guard batteries freedom to turn against the annoying French infantry. The skirmishers pressing up in front were driven back and the road, at least for a short stretch, cleared for a subsequent advance.

MEASURES OF THE FRENCH TO DEFEAT AN ATTACK ON
STE. MARIE.

The village of Ste. Marie aux Chênes, consisting of massive stone buildings, was almost completely enclosed by walls in front of which were an additional lot of wire fences and other field and garden walls and hedges. Very close to the center of the village was the church; on the west side, south of the exit toward Hatrize was a large, chateau-like house and several large factory buildings. The road to Hatrize forms the western continuation of the road which comes from St. Privat, and which turns at the market place in a northwesterly direction toward Auboué. The road from St. Ail, the only one coming from the south, also runs into the market place. The rows of houses, in the main, are alongside the roads from St. Privat to Auboué and Hatrize, forming the sides of an acute angle open toward the west. There was an entirely open stubble field on each front of attack. The French had thrown up no special defensive works and had originally thought more of defending the foreground than the village itself.

When the 2d Battalion, 94th Line Regiment, felt itself endangered by the approach of the 108th Rifle Regiment, it evacuated the defile at the northwestern exit of Ste. Marie and occupied the edge of the village.² The five companies of the 93d Line Regiment, which were deployed about 650 meters southeast of Ste. Marie, front toward St. Ail, now changed front toward the west, so that they could flank the attack of the Guard Fusilier Regiment coming from the east. General Colin, who commanded in Ste. Marie, impressed by the close approach of the Saxons, sent word to the commanding general of the 3d Division, General La Font de Villiers, that he needed support on his right wing. This call for help had at first no result. Only when the Germans were already in Ste. Marie and showed themselves at the eastern edge of the village where the battalions of the 75th and 91st Line Regiments, standing west of the St. Privat—Roncourt road, (except the 1st Battalion, 91st Regiment which remained at Roncourt) started, and even then not to help out General Colin, but to defend for the present the country west of Roncourt and St. Privat against the onpressing Germans. General Colin received the belated orders to evacuate Ste. Marie and to fall back through the ravine running in a northeasterly direction from Ste. Marie and to Homecourt so as not to mask the fire of the advancing troops. These latter troops spread over the en-

¹Shortage of ammunition also conduced to this retrograde movement.

²This movement led to the apprehension that the Guard Jäger Battalion might be attacked envelopingly from the north.

tire space between the thickets at Auboué and the St. Privat—Ste. Marie road and were accompanied by a horse battery.

THE 1st GUARD INFANTRY DIVISION STORMS THE SOUTH
FRONT OF STE. MARIE.

When the Saxon batteries opened their fire and the 47th Infantry Brigade advanced against the west front of Ste. Marie, the first line of the advance guard of the 1st Guard Infantry Division commenced to advance by rushes across the open country: the 3d and 2d Battalions, Guard Fusilier Regiment, from the south along the St. Ail—Ste. Marie road; the Guard Jäger Battalion and the Fusilier Battalion, 4th Guard Regiment, from the southwest. The battalions had deployed two to three companies each and when, enveloping the village in a large semi-circle, they had approached to within from 450 to 700 meters they opened a hot but rather ineffective fire on the edge of the village, behind the walls of which the hostile skirmishers sought cover after they had evacuated the foreground. In this advance a little protection was offered the Guard Jäger Battalion by a hedge; the Fusilier Battalion, 4th Guard Regiment, by a small stone wall southwest of the village. Up to those protecting obstacles each rush of the Germans was taken under effective fire by the village garrison. The rear lines also suffered losses from the chassepot bullets; and the fire of the hostile skirmishers hidden in the folds of the terrain southeast of Ste. Marie caused material losses to the right wing of the 3d Battalion, Guard Fusilier Regiment.

The regimental commander, Colonel von Erckert, was, for the greater part of the time, personally on the skirmish line and took care that the men rose up only for the purpose of firing; only the platoon commanders and noncommissioned officers, as well as the company commanders who had dismounted, kept their eyes fixed on the enemy; only when a wounded man arose to seek the dressing station, did a movement occur in the skirmish line. In this situation the Guard Fusiliers awaited the orders for the final charge for about a quarter of an hour.

In the meantime Colonel von Leonhardi formed the 47th Infantry Brigade against the west side of the village in the ravine of Auboué, with its left wing on the Hatrize—Ste. Marie road. The 12th Jäger Battalion, as first line, formed into line of companies; behind its right wing, the 104th Infantry Regiment, formed in three lines; behind its left wing, the 105th Infantry Regiment, also in three lines.

In the first line the two 1st Battalions were formed into line of companies; the two 2d Battalions similarly in the second line, but with closed up half-battalion in the center; in the third line the two 3d Battalions in column toward the center. Against the northwest side of the village there advanced at the same time the 2d and 3d Battalions, 108th Rifle Regiment of the former advance guard of the 23d Infantry Division, under General von Craushaar.

As soon as the fire effect against the enveloping walls became plainly discernible, and when also a few houses were afire, General von Pape ordered the commander of the 4th Guard Foot Regiment, Colonel von Neumann, to lead the two Grenadier battalions of the regiment to behind the left wing of the advance guard, to serve as support to it in the assault. After the 47th Infantry Brigade had completed its deployment west of the village he gave, toward 3 p.m., the signal for the attack in which the Guard Jäger Battalion was not to participate but to remain behind as a receiving point, should that be needed. Thereupon Colonel von Erckert first brought the supporting troops close to the skirmish lines and caused the Guard batteries firing on Ste. Marie to be notified that he would now assault. In the meantime the 1st Battalion, Guard Fusilier Regiment, brought up from Habonville, took position behind the right wing of the storming line; the two Grenadier Battalions of the 4th Guard Foot Regiment behind the left wing. As soon as these supporting troops reached the skirmish lines, Colonel von Erckert placed himself in front of the left wing of the skirmishers of his 3d Battalion and gave the command in a loud tone of voice easily distinguished above the roar of the fire: "Rise! Double time!" The entire leading line rose up and after a moment the Guard Jägers also were carried forward in the general pressure; skirmishers and closed up detachments flung themselves at the village with loud hurrahs and without firing a shot. The French defenders did not hold out against the storm, though the French batteries, having their attention called to the charge by the cheers of the storming troops, increased their fire; energetic resistance was offered only here and there. While the 2d Battalion, Guard Fusilier Regiment, and the Fusilier Battalion, 4th Guard Regiment, reached the edge of the village with immaterial losses, the 3d Battalion of the former regiment charged along both sides of the St. Ail—Ste. Marie road against a part of the hostile front on which the artillery fire had had little effect and was received with a hot fire by the village defenders there and the skirmishers southeast of Ste. Marie. But here also the enemy did not await the hand to hand encounter; the battalion succeeded in gaining the edge of the village in a few rushes. There a part of the men remained halted for a time, being fully exhausted, until General von Pape, with a few words of praise for their gallant conduct, cheered them on to pursue the enemy withdrawing from the village. The 10th Company in this turned east around the village and poured a hot pursuing fire on the retreating adversary.

General von Pape rode with the Guard Jägers into the village and endeavored, in conjunction with Colonel von Erckert and the battalion commanders, to establish a regulation occupation of the village of Ste. Marie aux Chênes. The 2d and 3d Battalions, Guard Fusilier Regiment, occupied the east edge; the 1st Battalion, having come up in the meantime, prolonged that front southeastward; the Guard Jäger Battalion reinforced them at some important points; the Fusilier Battalion, 4th

Guard Foot Regiment, proceeded to the northern exit of the village. In front of the northeast edge of the 10th Company, Guard Fusilier Regiment, the 3d Company, Guard Jäger Battalion, and the 9th Company, 4th Guard Regiment, who had followed the retreating enemy to beyond the village, formed an advanced group and soon entered into a hot fire fight with French battalions now coming from St. Privat and Roncourt to hold the foreground of the position of the 6th Corps against the Germans.

The two Grenadier battalions of the 4th Guard Foot Regiment were led by Colonel von Neumann to the west exit of the village. At 3.30 p.m. General von Pape sent the following report to Headquarters of the Guard Corps: "Ste. Marie has been taken at 3.30 p.m. Losses few. 18. 8. 70." Corps Headquarters replied to this report with the order that "for the present, possession of the village is to be secured; further action is to be taken only on receipt of subsequent orders."¹

After the assault General von Pape drew up the main body of the 1st Guard Infantry Division. The 2d Guard Foot Regiment took position to the right of the Grenadier battalions, 4th Guard Foot Regiment, so that now the three regiments of the 2d Guard Infantry Brigade were assembled in and at Ste. Marie. Toward 4 p.m. the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade commenced to deploy 400 meters southwest of Ste. Marie, facing northeast.

THE 47th INFANTRY BRIGADE ASSAULTS THE WEST SIDE OF STE. MARIE

Simultaneously with the Guard battalions, the 47th Infantry Brigade had thrown itself into the village from the west.

When the 12th Jäger Battalion, with dense firing lines in front, left the ravine south of Auboué and came into the open, it received a hot fire and charged at the run, without firing a shot, until the edge of the village was reached. Only at a few places of the village wall and in the interior was there actual contact with the enemy; the mass of the battalion immediately pressed through to the opposite edge of the village, but there it suffered material losses from the fire of the French troops advancing from the east on Ste. Marie and was compelled to halt. Only a few skirmish groups could hold their own in the open ground between the Ste. Marie—St. Privat road and the Ste. Marie—Montois la Montagne road. Others, mixed with troops of the 1st Guard Infantry Division, occupied the edge of the village toward the enemy. The first lines of the 104th and 105th Infantry Regiments followed closely, the 1st Battalion, 104th Regiment, wedging itself between the Prussian left wing and the 1st Battalion, 105th Regiment, and pressing into the gardens on the southwestern village edge. After having been reassembled, it cleared a few houses from which fire still came and later on reached the north edge of the village where parts of

¹ War Archives.

it took up the fight with French troops coming up.¹ The 1st Battalion, 105th Regiment, advanced at once up to the walls of the northwestern edge of the village, but was here brought to a stand by the hostile fire; one company occupied the east edge of the ravine of Homecourt close to the village.

The second line of the two infantry regiments had moved to the left. The 2d Battalion, 105th Infantry Regiment, reached Ste. Marie north of the road from Hatrize, pressed through the village as far as the ravine running from it to Homecourt, and occupied its eastern edge in conjunction with the remaining groups which had held their own in front in the open.

The 2d Battalion, 104th Regiment, first cleaned out the northwest part of the village of the last remaining defenders and with one company advanced as far as the Ste. Marie—Auboué road; a second company was sent there later on, while two companies remained in the southeastern part of the village.²

The effects of the great strain which the XIIth Army Corps had undergone in the last few days in the terrible heat and with but scant rations, soon made themselves felt in the Saxon battalions. Even during the final charge single men fell down from sheer exhaustion; in the village, organizations became disrupted in the general scrimmage and the companies which were thrown by the officers against the enemy advancing from the east were far from being at full strength.

BATTLES NORTH AND EAST OF STE. MARIE

The two 3d Battalions of the 104th and 105th Infantry Regiments had received orders from the brigade commander, Colonel von Leonhardi, to go around and attack the village on the north. The 3d Battalion, 104th Regiment, as soon as it approached the village, formed skirmishers under heavy losses and reinforced the detachments which had gained a foothold in the Homecourt ravine near the village.

The 3d Battalion, 105th Regiment, deployed into company columns, reached the ravine with its extreme left wing. Its situation soon became critical, receiving enfilading fire from the thickets between Auboué and Roncourt. There parts of the 75th Line Regiment had taken position when that regiment advanced on the right flank of the fresh French forces, in order to turn against the Saxons south of the bushes as well as against the 23d Infantry Division advancing against the thickets from the west. The losses had increased materially in a short space of time when the 3d Battalion of the 108th Rifle Regiment brought welcome help.

In the first line of the advance guard of the 23d Infantry Division, which General von Craushaar had brought up from Moineville, the 2d and 3d Battalions, 108th Rifle Regiment, had advanced along both sides of the Coinville—Ste. Marie road. The 2d Battalion on the right had

¹Royal Saxon War Archives.

²Royal Saxon War Archives.

already opened fire with its 7th Company against Ste. Marie when General von Craushaar received orders from Prince George of Saxony to join the march of the 23d Division on Auboué. The orders issued in consequence by General von Craushaar for breaking off the battle could be obeyed only by the 2d Battalion and the 1st Battalion following up in second line. The 3d Battalion of the Rifle Regiment, whose 11th Company had entered the village simultaneously with the 47th Infantry Brigade, believed that it could not abandon that brigade.

Later when the battalion commander, Major Allmer, saw that the village was in German hands he marched off in a northerly direction to hasten up behind his regiment. On the way he perceived the difficult situation of the 3d Battalion, 105th Infantry Regiment, and led his companies, which deployed on the run, to the support of that endangered battalion. The enemy, who had the left wing of the Saxons at the ravine of Homecourt surrounded with fire, was thrown back into the woods between Roncourt and Auboué.¹ The Saxon artillery also participated in this fight. This was the 2d Light Battery of the 23d Infantry Division, which had remained in the vicinity west of Ste. Marie. It went into position on the Hatrizé—Ste. Marie road and turned against a hostile battery² which was in position southeast of the thickets between Auboué and Roncourt and was greatly harrassing the Saxons with its fire.

In this manner the Saxon infantry succeeded in holding itself north of Ste. Marie. However, these were but weak forces which had reached the foot of the plateau running from St. Privat to Roncourt and to the south edge of the thickets at Auboué. In face of the strong, fresh troops of the enemy entering the battle and of the fire which the French batteries had resumed, there could be no thought of pursuing the garrison of Ste. Marie retreating toward Roncourt. Under the effect of the German artillery fire General Colin had already decided on the retreat when the German infantry started the assault. What remained in the village and continued the battle there was merely a rear guard. The larger part of the 94th Line Regiment escaped through the ravine of Homecourt to behind the protecting line of the 75th and 91st Regiments. The regiment was, of course, badly shaken, and, after having reached the forest of Jaumont east of Roncourt, had to reform its units.³

Not less hotly waged, although less bloody than at Homecourt, was the battle on the east side of Ste. Marie. Here the 2d Battalion, 93d Line Regiment, from its position 600 meters southeast of Ste. Marie, had poured a steady rapid fire on the troops appearing at the east side of the village. When it had fired away its ammunition and was about

¹The battalion commander, Major Allmer, was killed.

²This was the horse battery which had joined the advance of the 75th and 91st Line Regiments.

³The 94th Regiment lost altogether 320 men. Among the numerous prisoners taken in Ste. Marie was a large number of marauders of different regiments.

to evacuate its position with its first line¹ there arrived north of it the 91st Line Regiment which had advanced with its 3d Battalion north of the St. Privat—Ste. Marie road, its 2d Battalion farther to the right against the village. The 1st Battalion followed up somewhat in rear, echeloned to the right, and, when it had come up with the other two battalions, turned with its right wing toward the ravine of Homecourt, in order to sweep the length of that ravine with its fire.

The assaulting troops of the 1st Guard Infantry Division had just been partly reformed and had occupied the edges of the village, when General von Pape, toward 4 p.m., observed the approach of fresh hostile battalions. He hastily gave orders to the two Grenadier battalions, 4th Guard Foot Regiment, to enter the village. The noise of battle raging the other side of the village, the return and reassembly of single infantry detachments and the large number of wounded gave the Grenadier battalions the impression that the battle was turning unfavorably and that urgent help was needed. The 1st Battalion therefore proceeded from the west entrance of the village to the road toward St. Privat with the object of gaining the eastern exit of the village. That exit was under a particularly heavy hostile fire; the battalion commander, Major von Sichart, quickly caused a second exit to be broken through the wall further north and immediately reinforced the garrison of the gardens there by the 4th Company. One platoon rushed 200 meters eastward from the wall, took position at a field hedge and opened a rapid fire on the French which by then had approached to within 500 meters of the village. The 2d Battalion, 4th Guard Regiment, had received orders from Colonel von Neumann to hold the northern exits at all events and, arrived on the village road toward Auboué, caused two companies to occupy the edge of the village toward Montois la Montagne where the battle appeared to have reached its height. But already so many troops, especially of the Saxons, were pressing into that part of the village that the battalion had great difficulty in forcing its way to the exit toward Auboué and arrived there only when the battle had become less fierce. The Fusilier Battalion, 4th Guard Regiment, which immediately after the assault had turned against the northern exit, had in the meantime advanced with three companies into the terrain north of the village, but returned along the road from Auboué as soon as the battle was observed to decrease in volume.²

THE GERMAN ARTILLERY INTERFERES IN THE BATTLE AT STE. MARIE

When at 3 p.m. the French batteries which had been advanced on Ste. Marie had fallen back on Roncourt and St. Privat, the two bat-

¹The general procedure in the French army appears to have been to fall back as soon as the ammunition gave out. In those days there was nothing known about bringing up ammunition from the rear when fighting in the open.

²The 9th Company was engaged in battle farther east.

talions of the Guard artillery in action south of St. Ail advanced by echelons from the right wing, each battery by itself, across the Habonville—St. Ail road. The change of position was executed very slowly, however, as single batteries had to take up intermediate positions to fire on and drive back the hostile skirmishers in their front.

By 3.30 p.m. all batteries were in the new position, the right wing of which was about 600 meters northeast of Habonville, the left wing touching St. Ail. The 4th Light Battery had advanced 300 meters northeast of St. Ail. The French batteries, undoubtedly inferior, still held their own in their favorable positions and were supported as before by skirmish lines of the 6th and 4th French Corps, which continually charged against the German batteries unsupported in front by infantry.¹ Though the batteries in general succeeded in holding the hostile infantry at a distance, there remained in the foreground single skirmishers and groups whose fire annoyed the batteries greatly, and was difficult to control. While the 1st Foot Battalion, Guard Artillery, supported by the Hessian artillery, continued the fight against the opponent on the heights southwest of St. Privat, the corps artillery was enabled to participate in the infantry battle at Ste. Marie aux Chênes and gradually take under fire with all its batteries the hostile battalions advancing against the village. Although it succeeded in this manner in stopping the hostile infantry advance, it was not able, on the other hand, because of the long range, to produce any material effect against the hostile batteries which, from their position northwest of St. Privat, were causing serious losses to the Saxons north of Ste. Marie. The continuous threatening by hostile infantry chained them to their position.² A change for the better occurred only when the Saxon batteries, going farther north, approached closer to the enemy.

During the assault on Ste. Marie aux Chênes the batteries of the 24th Infantry Division and of the Saxon Corps artillery, being masked by the advancing infantry, had ceased firing and temporarily awaited in their positions the probable outcome of the assault. Only the 3d Battery of the 24th Infantry Division, held in reserve, received, during the advance of the infantry, orders from the battalion commander, Major Richter, to go into position west of Ste. Marie and to fire on the hostile batteries northwest of St. Privat, as these batteries would undoubtedly turn their fire with increased intensity on the lost village. The battery, with some losses, unlimbered west of Ste. Marie and in conjunction with the 2d Light Battery of the 23d Infantry Division, already in position there, turned its fire on the hostile batteries southeast of the thickets of Auboué. When these batteries were silenced, the 2d Light Battery limbered up to join its division at Auboué. The 3d Light Battery remained for the time where it was while south of it the 3d Foot Battalion of the corps artillery under

¹ War Archives.

² For the protection of the artillery the 1st Battalion, 4th Guard Grenadier Regiment arrived at about this time, taking position sideward and in rear of the artillery.

Major Hoch¹ crossed the Auboué ravine to take position to the front.

Only after Ste. Marie had been taken did the corps artillery receive orders from corps headquarters to advance by echelons from the right wing, and it at first sent out the 3d Foot Battalion, while the 4th was temporarily kept back in readiness west of the Auboué ravine. Of the 3d Battalion, the 5th Light and 5th Heavy Batteries unlimbered east of the Ste. Marie—Auboué road under a hot infantry fire. In a short time a large part of the men and horses had been disabled, the battalion commander, Major Hoch, also being wounded. The batteries were forced to fall back behind the road to restore order.² The 6th Heavy Battery had found a better position in the meadow ground south of hill 239. On its right the 4th Heavy, on its left the 3d Light Battery of the 24th Infantry Division went into position, having hastened up from the vicinity southwest and west of Ste. Marie; the other two batteries of this division remained south of the village in their old position to fire, in conjunction with the Guard batteries, on the hostile infantry north of the Ste. Marie—St. Privat road. The fire of the batteries which had gone into position on the Ste. Marie—Auboué road very quickly decreased the activity of the hostile artillery northwest of St. Privat, and were soon able to turn their fire exclusively on the advancing skirmish lines of the enemy. The result was not long delayed; under the combined effect of the Saxon and Guard artillery the hostile infantry was forced to halt and, with the exception of some weaker detachments, finally fell back to the main position at St. Privat.

In the meantime the 4th Foot Battalion of the Saxon corps artillery had taken a new position in readiness northwest of Ste. Marie behind the 3d Battalion, as it did not appear advisable to go into position in the vicinity of the woods of Auboué which were still in the enemy's hands. The two last batteries of the 24th Infantry Division came up from south of Ste. Marie and joined the leading artillery line, so that the Saxon artillery, except the batteries of the 23d Infantry Division and the 1st Horse Battery of the 12th Cavalry Division, were now assembled on the Ste. Marie—Auboué road.

THE BATTLE AT STE. MARIE CEASES TOWARD 4 P.M.

Observing events north of Ste. Marie the commander of the 24th Infantry Division, General von Nehrhoff, had gained the impression that the battle had assumed dimensions larger than was in consonance with the battle objective proper:—the occupation and holding of the village. He therefore took measures to break off the battle and was confirmed in his view by an order from the Crown Prince directing him to confine himself to holding Ste. Marie.

¹Fifth and 6th Heavy, 5th Light Batteries.

²The 5th Heavy was very soon able to participate again in the action; the 5th Light took a longer time. It had lost one noncommissioned officer, two men and 20 horses. All the horses of one piece had been hit.

The calling back of the Saxon infantry occurred at the same time as the retreat of the French main forces, so that by 4.30 p.m. the infantry battle around the village had gradually ceased.¹ General von Nehrhoff agreed with General von Pape that the Saxons should evacuate the village and that only the Guard should occupy it.² The first two battalions of the 104th and 105th Infantry Regiments were drawn out of the village and assembled behind the northwest corner. To bring the remaining battalions back out of the still hot battle north and east of the village was more difficult and took much time; so that only after 5 p.m. was the larger part of the 47th Infantry Brigade assembled at the northwest corner of Ste. Marie.

The Guard Jäger Battalion, the Guard Fusilier Regiment, and the 4th Guard Regiment remained within the village. In its proximity west and south were the remaining parts of the 1st Guard Infantry Division which had come up in the meantime, except the artillery. The Guard Hussar Regiment also came up.

The fights around Ste. Marie aux Chênes had lasted from about 2.30 to 4.30 p.m. and had required heavy sacrifices at certain places. The 3d Battalion, Guard Fusilier Regiment, which in its advance on Ste. Marie was heavily fired on not only in front but also in the right flank, suffered most. It lost about twice as many as the other Prussian battalions participating in the assault. The losses of the Saxon battalions were comparatively small in the assault proper, but greater in the attempts to follow up the enemy in the battles north of the village. Single batteries had suffered heavy losses, less through the hostile artillery fire than through the infantry fire to which they had been exposed.

MOVEMENTS OF TROOPS ON THE FRENCH RIGHT WING
DURING AND SUBSEQUENT TO THE BATTLE AT
STE. MARIE AUX CHÊNES

When Marshal Canrobert gained the impression that the weakly occupied Ste. Marie could not be held against the superior and enveloping attack of the Germans, he decided to conduct the main defense on the plateau of St. Privat and to hold that supporting point against the threatened German attack. At 2.30 p.m. five battalions of the 1st Division, Tixier, entered the village from the vicinity south of St. Privat; two battalions of the 12th Line Regiment reinforced the garrison of the west front;³ three battalions of the 10th Line Regiment prolonged that front northward to about halfway between St. Privat and Roncourt; while an engineer company prepared the village for defense. These measures were taken simultaneously with the movements of the French batteries at and west of St. Privat into positions

¹One of the last to fall was Colonel von Erckert, commanding the Guard Fusilier Regiment.

²Posthumous papers of General von Pape.

³Four companies of the 1st Battalion, 93d, and three companies of the 1st Battalion, 94th Line Regiment.

farther in rear. Two of these batteries temporarily disappeared from the fighting line.

The remaining eleven batteries of the 6th Corps formed a new, extended artillery front reaching from about halfway between St. Privat and Roncourt as far as the right wing of the 4th Corps. Of these eleven batteries only six, which stood close to St. Privat, participated in the battles around Ste. Marie; four batteries south of the village fired all the time on the troops of the IXth Army Corps at the Bois de la Cusse; one battery, farthest to the north, did not participate at all in the fight. Because of the superiority of the German artillery, the artillery fight was kept up sparingly and at times ceased entirely, to be resumed at propitious moments during the battle. The great shortage of ammunition made this necessary; not one of these batteries had been silenced by the hostile artillery.

Shortage of ammunition caused Marshal Canrobert grave apprehension. Soon after the opening of the engagement he had sent Lieutenant de Bellegarde to the commander-in-chief with request for ammunition and support. Marshal Bazaine replied that he must send his emptied ammunition wagons to the artillery reserve park in Plappeville and promised him a 12-pounder battery and one Guard division in case he became engaged in a more serious battle. Toward 2 p.m. Marshal Canrobert again sent an officer, Captain de Chalus, to the commander-in-chief with the repeated demand for as much ammunition as possible and immediate starting of the promised Guard division; but a timely sending of both was not to be obtained.

The course and final outcome of the battle at Ste. Marie caused additional shifting of troops in the 6th Corps. The advance of the 75th and 91st Line Regiments, accompanied by a horse battery, was joined in second line by the 10th and one battalion of the 12th Line Regiment, going a few hundred meters beyond the west boundary of St. Privat. When the battalions of the 75th and 91st Regiments fell back, the 2d Battalion, 10th Line Regiment, took a receiving position about 1500 meters northwest of St. Privat, through which the 2d and 3d Battalions, 75th Line Regiment fell back, to halt behind the St. Privat—Roncourt road. Of the 91st Line Regiment the 2d and 3d Battalions halted about 600 meters west of St. Privat, the 1st Battalion still more to the west, south of the 2d Battalion, 10th Line Regiment. Of the remaining parts of the 10th and 12th Line Regiments some returned to their former places in the village, while some remained west of it. Of the 93d Line Regiment, the retreating parts of which assembled in St. Privat, eight companies had remained in the foreground south of the road toward Ste. Marie aux Chênes.

The interference of the 23d Infantry Division at the woods of Auboué, which made its effect felt during the fire fight north of Ste. Marie, caused an additional weakening of the left wing in favor of the threatened right; the entire rest of the 1st Division, Tixier, was drawn up to St. Privat, so that, south of the Ste. Marie—St. Privat road, only the infantry of the 4th Division, Levassor Sorval, remained in its old

positions. The 9th Jäger Battalion took station on the west front of St. Privat; the 4th Line Regiment and the 3d Battalion of the 100th took position at the northeast corner, while the other two battalions of the 100th Regiment remained in reserve at Jerusalem. Roncourt at this time received a stronger garrison as the 1st Battalion, 9th Line Regiment, which up to then had stood southeast of the village, joined the 1st Battalion, 75th Line Regiment already there.

In the French artillery, also, there was important shifting caused by the final arrival of German troops in front of the main position of St. Privat. It was believed that it would soon be necessary to take measures for the retreat and that the diminishing ammunition ought to be husbanded for that event. Lieutenant Colonel Montluisant gradually took five of the batteries which were in position south of St. Privat to a receiving position at the quarries of Amanweiler.

The remaining five batteries were concentrated behind the ridge between Roncourt and St. Privat, but kept up only an intermittent fire. Of the remaining batteries of the 6th Corps, two had driven back to Plappeville to get ammunition, one had sought shelter behind St. Privat.

With the troops which had participated in the battle of Ste. Marie and the subsequent fight at the woods of Auboué against the 23d Infantry Division the movements to the rear into the main position proceeded gradually. The battalions of the 91st and 75th Line Regiments had in general kept out of range of the needle guns during the battle at Ste. Marie and had utilized the longer range of their chasse-pots to good effect. Though it was mainly due to the effect of the German artillery fire that they were compelled to fall back, shortage of ammunition was also a factor. Yet they evacuated the plateau north of St. Privat—Ste. Marie road but slowly, starting with the left wing and leaving single groups of skirmishers behind to continue the fire fight. At the woods of Auboué where, beside the 2d and 3d Battalions, 75th Line Regiment, additional forces were inserted to stop the advancing 23d Infantry Division the fight lasted longer. This slow retrograde movement of the French infantry, connected with the coming up of fresh forces, was intended by Marshal Canrobert to stop the advance of the Germans by means of the superior fire power of his infantry. Not much could be expected any longer of his artillery which, with the exception of some few batteries, was finally compelled to cease action. He still hoped that the promised Guard division would soon arrive.

THE ADVANCE OF THE 23D INFANTRY DIVISION IS STOPPED.

THE ENVELOPMENT IS EXTENDED FARTHER

TO THE NORTH

The assembly of the troops of the 23d Infantry Division in the ravine of Auboué near Coinville, from which place Prince George of Saxony intended to execute the ordered advance through the woods of

Auboué against Roncourt, made but slow progress. The 46th Infantry Brigade, which had, through an error, turned toward Moineville instead of Coinville, did not join. Of the 45th Infantry Brigade, at the start only two battalions of the former advance guard, the 2d and 3d, 108th Rifle Regiment, were present. They had been able opportunely to break off the engagement at Ste. Marie, leaving only the 3d Battalion there, and now received orders to march toward Auboué and protect the left flank of the division. In that direction—toward Homecourt and Joeuf—one squadron of the 1st Cavalry Regiment was then reconnoitering. Later on the Grenadier Regiments Nos. 100 and 101 arrived by detachments. Their march had crossed with other troops west of Ste. Marie and they had been fired on by hostile artillery while in the narrow ravine of Auboué.¹

The regiments were directed by detachments, as they arrived, toward Auboué. In the meantime Prince George had become convinced that he could not execute the intended attack on Roncourt from Coinville, as the 47th Infantry Brigade was deploying in the space between Ste. Marie and the woods of Auboué. He therefore sought room for deployment farther north.

The commanding general of the XIIth Army Corps, Crown Prince Albert of Saxony, had ridden ahead from Batilly to the ravine of Auboué west of Ste. Marie and from there could view the country as far as St. Privat and to beyond Roncourt. The movements of hostile troops in front of the line St. Privat—Roncourt did not escape his attention and, when he also perceived French infantry advancing in the direction of the woods of Auboué, he informed Prince George of his observations and directed him to occupy in all haste that part of the woods projecting toward Roncourt. This order was transmitted by Prince George at about 4 p.m. to the 45th Infantry Brigade, assembled in the meantime at Auboué.² The 46th Infantry Brigade had been looked for in vain. The leading battalion of the 45th Infantry Brigade, the 1st of the 108th Rifle Regiment, had just left the northern exit of Auboué leading toward Homecourt when it was called back by the adjutant of Prince George and received directions to advance as quickly as possible to the woods extending toward Roncourt and get there ahead of the enemy. The companies turned to the right, taking direction almost on Ste. Marie to reach, going over hill 247, 800 meters east of Auboué, the southern part of the woods. Prince George personally called the attention of the battalion to the importance of its task and induced it to move as rapidly as possible. The 2d Battalion, 108th Rifle Regiment, was sent by the brigade commander, General von Craushaar, to follow up the 1st Battalion, and the remaining parts of the 45th Infantry Brigade were directed toward hill 247, where Prince George now intended to assemble his division under protection of the two advanced Rifle battalions.

¹The losses were immaterial.

²With the exception of the 3d Battalion, 108th Rifle Regiment, which was still south of the woods of Auboué.

Corps Headquarters also had searched for the 46th Infantry Brigade, but it was found only after 5 p.m., by Captain von der Planitz of the Saxon General Staff, at Moineville and was sent from there through Coinville. At 6 p.m. it crossed the Ste. Marie—Auboué road.¹

In the meantime Crown Prince Albert thought he perceived hostile artillery at Roncourt also and that he saw movements of French infantry in the village.² He concluded from this that his ordered envelopment by the 23d Infantry Division through the woods of Auboué on Roncourt would still strike the hostile front. He therefore directed Prince George at about 4 p.m. to reach out still farther to the north and started the 48th Infantry Brigade, which had remained as corps reserve at Batilly, to place it at the disposal of the 23d Infantry Division for that purpose.

These events took place while the leading battalions of the 45th Infantry Brigade were already engaged in the woods of Auboué with the enemy who had entered them from the east. This engagement required the gradual insertion of the entire brigade except two battalions.

THE 45th INFANTRY BRIGADE TAKES POSSESSION OF THE
WOODS OF AUBOUÉ.—THE 48th INFANTRY BRIGADE
MARCHES ON MONTAIS

The thickets between Roncourt and Auboué form an irregular and densely undergrown stretch of woods, the southern part of which is traversed by the steep ravine of Homecourt. The 1st and 2d Battalions, 108th Rifle Regiment, arriving there first, had great difficulty in forcing their way in an easterly direction through the one and one-half kilometer wide strip of woods. South of them troops of the 47th Infantry Brigade were partly engaged and partly employed in assembling, among them the 3d Battalion of the 108th Rifle Regiment.³ Endeavors to go south around the woods were unsuccessful because of the fire of the French battalions in battle northeast of Ste. Marie. When the skirmishers in the forest had ascended the steep banks of the Homecourt ravine, the 1st Battalion on the right, the 2d on the left, they encountered a firm resistance by the French who had entered from the east.⁴ The 2d Battalion had good protection against infantry and artillery fire in the cross ravine running toward Roncourt. On its right the 3d Battalion, brought up in the meantime, assembled, after having driven back weaker hostile forces toward Montois la Montagne.

¹The brigade commander, Colonel von Montbé, arrived at Moineville, hearing the sound of battle at Ste. Marie aux Chênes, had sent off his adjutant with a request for orders; but he did not return until later.—Von Schimpff, *Das XII. Korps im Kriege 1870-71*, vol. I, page 91. (See footnote, page 174, *ante*.)

²These were the movements of the 1st Battalion, 9th Line Regiment which was drawing up to Roncourt. There were no batteries at Roncourt.

³The 3d Battalion had just driven back parts of the 75th Line Regiment, which flanked the left wing of the 47th Infantry Brigade, into the eastern part of the woods.

⁴Apparently parts of the 75th Line Regiment, also numerous dispersed men.

As the hostile resistance appeared to be growing stronger through the reception of fresh detachments, General von Craushaar decided to insert the 100th Body Grenadier Regiment. The 1st Battalion reinforced the right wing of the 108th Rifle Regiment, taking position partly in the open ground south of the woods; the 3d Battalion reinforced the left wing; the 2d Battalion followed up in half battalions. Of the two wooded strips running southward, east of the Homecourt ravine, the first was gained by a rush; the other was voluntarily evacuated by the French.¹

It was impossible, however, to leave the eastern edge of the woods as the Saxons met the heavy fire of the French battalions which had taken position to support the 75th Line Regiment fighting at the woods. The 1st Battalion, 9th Line Regiment, arrived at Roncourt, had deployed north of the 1st Battalion, 75th Line Regiment, along the woods and hedges between Montois and Roncourt;² the 2d Battalion remained in reserve south of Roncourt. Farther southwest the 2d Battalion, 10th Line Regiment, entered the battle in conjunction with parts of the 91st Line Regiment. The eastern edge of the woods was thus spanned on a large arc by an infantry line which was supported by the fire of a battery in position south of Roncourt.

The left wing of the 108th Rifle Regiment which came into the open north of the woods at the neighboring ravine running toward Montois la Montagne suffered especially under the fire of the French. Two companies of the 2d Battalion, 100th Body Regiment, were inserted here as support. In the meantime it was believed that Montois la Montagne had been occupied by hostile infantry, and it seemed now advisable to send forces against that village, especially as French detachments appeared to be turning towards it from the Orne valley in the north.³ Of the 101st Grenadier Regiment, which had followed the engaged parts of the 45th Infantry Brigade with some interval, the 1st Battalion was deployed in the open between the woods of Auboué and Montois la Montagne, but fired only a few shots, as the fight was broken off when the advanced French infantry retreated into the main position at St. Privat.

Prince George had decided to delay the further advance of the 23d Infantry Division until the 48th Infantry Brigade, placed at his disposal, had enveloped the hostile right wing.⁴ By his directions General von Craushaar halted the troops of the 45th Infantry Brigade, caused the loose battalions to close up and occupied then the east edge of the woods of Auboué. The 2d and 3d Battalions, 101st Grenadier Regiment, were kept back west of the woods. The artillery of the

¹Prisoners were taken in the forest from the 75th, 91st, 10th and 4th Regiments and the 51st Regiment of the 3d Corps.

²Whether the troops deployed actually belonged to that battalion is not quite clear; according to the French General Staff Account no extension of the front beyond Roncourt had taken place at all.

³Royal Saxon War Archives.—The belief that Montois la Montagne had been occupied by the French was erroneous, according to French statements.

⁴Von Schimpff, *Das XII. Korps im Kriege 1870-71*; vol. I, page 111 (Page 185, ante).

23d Infantry Division, which had arrived in the meantime and had been engaged with the 2d Heavy Battery in the infantry combat, firing successfully from a position at the southwest corner of the woods, received orders to join the the 48th Infantry Brigade.¹

It was 5 p.m. when the 48th Infantry Brigade arrived from Batilly at the 23d Infantry Division, in the vicinity of Auboué. Basing himself on orders from corps headquarters Prince George had at 4.30 p.m. issued the following orders for the extension of the enveloping movement around the hostile right wing:²

* * *

The Orne valley with its steep sides offered excellent protection for the planned envelopment by the 48th Infantry Brigade. The 2d Cavalry Regiment of the 24th Infantry Division, which had up to then been protecting the corps artillery, finally joined also the enveloping movement. Toward 4.30 p.m. it received orders from corps headquarters to turn against the hostile cavalry which was seen between Roncourt and Montois la Montagne.³ For this purpose the regiment attempted to go around the woods of Auboué on the south, but, these woods being at that time still occupied by the enemy, received such a heavy infantry and also artillery fire that it turned about and advanced west and north of the woods toward Montois la Montagne. As it could discover no hostile cavalry it joined the enveloping march of the 48th Infantry Brigade.

The cavalry brigade of the 12th Cavalry Division at the Bois de Ponty also received orders from Crown Prince Albert to join with the 1st Horse Battery in the enveloping march and gain the extreme hostile wing in rear. Two squadrons were at the same time sent into the valley of the Mosel to destroy the railroad and telegraph in the vicinity of Maizières.

These orders were caused by the following orders from Headquarters, II^d Army:⁴

* * *

HEADQUARTERS, II^d ARMY, AFTER THE CAPTURE OF STE. MARIE

The just quoted orders were issued by Prince Frederick Charles immediately after the report of the capture by the Guard Corps of Ste. Marie aux Chênes had reached him. In them he repeated what had been expressed in his orders of 11.45 a.m. to the XIIth Army Corps, once more stating his definite desire not to allow the enemy, fortunately now held, to escape again. The battle appeared to him to be

¹2d Heavy, 1st and 2d Light Batteries. The 1st Heavy Battery probably was still with the 48th Infantry Brigade.

²Royal Saxon War Archives.—General Staff Account, page 768.—Von Schimpff, *Das XII. Korps im Kriege 1870-71*; vol. I, page 115. (For the order, omitted here, see page 190, *ante*.)

³Parts of the Cavalry Division du Barail, changing position.

⁴Royal Saxon War Archives.—Von der Goltz, *II. Armée*, page 143; von Schimpff, *Das XII. Korps im Kriege 1870-71*; vol. I, page 109. (For order see page 70, *ante*.)

progressing favorably. As far as his eyes could reach along the enemy's position the latter's artillery was inferior and unable to keep up an effective fire. The conditions at Roncourt, of course, could not be seen from the vicinity west of Habonville. Under these circumstances the Prince did not hesitate to arrange measures so that the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade of the 2d Guard Division, which had arrived in the meantime west of Habonville, was placed at the disposal of the IXth Army Corps, that corps appearing to be most in want of support.¹ Captain von Bergen sent a report from the German right wing that the VIIIth Army Corps was in possession of Gravelotte. There also then the battle appeared to progress favorably. In the meantime the Xth Army Corps had arrived at Batilly and the Prince called the commanding general, von Voigts-Rhetz, to report to him, and then discussed with him how he would have to support the Guard Corps in its subsequent attack.

THE LEFT WING AND CENTER OF THE II^d ARMY COMPLETE DEPLOYMENT

By this time – it was 4.45 p.m. – the battle in front of the II^d Army commenced to decrease in volume, and almost entirely ceased after the end of the struggle at the woods of Auboué. The French artillery was almost completely silent; the German artillery, after completion of the infantry fights at Ste. Marie, had kept up only an intermittent fire and thus, while the XIIth Army Corps executed its enveloping movement toward Montois la Montagne, a sort of pause had occurred on this part of the battlefield. In the Guard Corps as well as in the XIIth Army Corps the main thought was to await the enveloping of the French right wing. Therefore the 1st Guard Infantry Division remained in its assembly formation in and at Ste. Marie. The 2d Guard Infantry Division was brought opposite to the 1st. It had reached the small wood between Anoux la Grange and Batilly at 2 p.m. and had marched into position with the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade on the right, with the 4th on the left of the small wood, just at the time when the main body of the 1st Guard Infantry Division had started from there towards the left to the ravine at Habonville.

The continued harassing of the Guard artillery by French riflemen had caused Prince Hohenlohe as well as the commander of the corps artillery, Colonel von Scherbening, to ask for infantry protection from the 2d Guard Infantry Division shortly after its arrival. In compliance with this request the 1st Battalion, 4th Guard Grenadier Regiment, had about 3 p.m. been detailed for that duty. The battalion commander, Major von Rosenberg, distributed his companies in such manner that the 3d took position on the right wing in the basin northeast of Habonville, the 4th behind the center, the 1st and 2d on the left wing of the Guard artillery which had in the meantime taken up its

¹About this time the impression at II^d Army Headquarters was that the French had entered the Bois de la Cusse, but been driven out again by the Hessians.

second position south of St. Ail. When orders arrived from Prince Frederick Charles to send the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade to report to the IXth Army Corps the brigade started at 4 p.m., accompanied by the Guard Rifle Battalion, the 5th Light Guard Battery and the 2d and 3d Guard Pioneer Companies, in the direction of Habonville, and en route received from Headquarters of the IXth Army Corps directions to take up a position in readiness behind the 25th Infantry Division south of Habonville; the 5th Light Guard Battery to reinforce the artillery at Champenois. In obedience to these orders the brigade moved to the southeast of Habonville: in the first line the Guard Rifle Battalion and the 2d and the Fusilier Battalions, of the Kaiser Alexander 1st Guard Grenadier Regiment; in the second line the Königin Elizabeth 3d Guard Grenadier Regiment. The 1st Battalion of the Kaiser Alexander 1st Guard Grenadier Regiment was sent into Habonville, as that place was unoccupied after the Guard Fusiliers had left it.

Thus the commander of the 2d Guard Infantry Division, General von Budritzki, had at the small wood between Anoux la Grange and Batilly only the 4th Infantry Brigade, minus the already detached 1st battalion, 4th Grenadier Regiment, the 5th and 6th Heavy and the 6th Light Batteries, and the 2d Guard Ulan Regiment.

At about 4.10 p.m. General von Dannenberg, chief of staff of the Guard Corps, personally brought the orders to advance in the direction of St. Ail; the attacking object to be pointed out there.¹ The march was at once commenced, the railroad crossed west of Habonville and the direction of St. Ail taken down the ravine of Auboué. The battalions marched in formation of columns toward the center behind each other. Between the two leading battalions were the three batteries. The 2d Guard Ulan Regiment trotted on ahead and took position northwest of St. Ail at the slope of the ravine of Auboué. When, toward 5 p.m., the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade approached St. Ail to take a position in readiness north of that place General von Budritzki directed the artillery to move ahead. Probably left in ignorance of the fact that Ste. Marie was in German hands, the three batteries unlimbered against that village; but when they perceived their error they proceeded, without having fired, further north in order to turn, a few hundred meters south of Ste. Marie east of the St. Ail—Ste. Marie road, against St. Privat la Montagne. The 6th Light Battery was on the right, the 5th Heavy in the center and the 6th Heavy on the left. By orders of the battalion commander the highest houses of St. Privat were to be taken under fire; there was no other artillery target, but the batteries received from advanced French infantry groups such a heavy fire at about 600 meters range, that they had at first to direct their fire on these, without having had a chance to get the range of the ordered target by sighting shots. This fire fight was continued until the Guard infantry started the charge on St. Privat.

By this time the Xth Army Corps had deployed southwest of Batilly

¹ War Archives.

where it rested for a short time; the 20th Infantry Division in front; between it and the 19th, the corps artillery; farther right, on hill 265 between Batilly and Jouaville, the 5th Cavalry Division which arrived a little later.

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VI. Attack of the Guard Corps on St. Privat la Montagne

REVIEW OF THE SITUATION OF THE SECOND

ARMY AT 5 P.M.

At 5 p.m. the IXth Army Corps held the line from Chantrenne through Champenois and the east edge of the Bois de la Cusse as far as the Amanweiler—St. Ail road and had weak reserves behind that front. Farther in rear, southwest of Verneville, was the 6th Infantry Division of the IIIrd Army Corps, while the 5th Division was still on the march to the front. The 6th Cavalry Division was south of Anoux la Grange and the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade south of Habonville.

Of the Guard Corps the artillery, with the artillery of the 1st Guard Division, was in its second position southeast of St. Ail¹ and kept up a very desultory fire on live targets showing themselves in the vicinity of St. Privat and occasionally fired on the village itself. It was protected to some extent at least on the flanks against hostile infantry by the 1st Battalion, Königin 4th Guard Grenadier Regiment.

The batteries of the 2d Guard Infantry Division between St. Ail and Ste. Marie fired on hostile skirmishers in their front and at targets at St. Privat.

Of the infantry of the 2d Guard Division, the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade was deployed in two lines,² on the slope north of St. Ail. It could perceive only a few advance hostile skirmishers and off and on suffered from chassépot fire.

The 1st Guard Infantry Division occupied Ste. Marie aux Chênes with the 2d Guard Infantry Brigade; the Guard Fusilier Regiment and the Guard Jäger Battalion were deployed on the east front; the 4th Guard Regiment in the village and the 2d Guard Regiment behind the village. Southwest of Ste. Marie aux Chênes, about 400 meters from the village, the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade was deployed, facing the northeast. The hostile rifle fire fell among its ranks as well as those of the 2d Guard Regiment.

The divisional cavalry regiments stood behind the infantry of their divisions at the ravine running from Habonville to Auboué. The Guard Cavalry Division was halted at Batilly, the two attached horse batteries with it.

Of the XIIth Army Corps the 47th Infantry Brigade was still engaged in establishing order in its ranks northwest of Ste. Marie aux Chênes.

¹ The 4th Light Battery was by itself about 800 meters southeast of St. Ail.

² Only five battalions strong, the 1st Battalion of the Königin Regiment securing the artillery.

The mass of the Saxon artillery was still in the execution of a forward movement. The retreat of the hostile infantry north of the Ste. Marie—St. Privat road which had been caused by its fire, and the cleaning out of the woods of Auboué gave that artillery a chance—by direction of Crown Prince Albert—to make a turn from the Ste. Marie—Auboué to the Ste. Marie—Homecourt road. The 2d Heavy Battery of the 23d Infantry Division was already in position at this road immediately south of the woods; but it soon left that position as it had orders to join the other batteries of the 23d Infantry Division and accompany with them the enveloping march of the 48th Infantry Brigade. At 4.45 p.m. the batteries of the corps artillery and of the 23th Infantry Division took station where the above mentioned heavy battery had stood, facing eastward; the corps artillery occupied the line with its left wing as far as the woods of Auboué; the right wing of the batteries of the 24th Division was close to Ste. Marie aux Chênes. This change of position took until 5.30 p.m. The 4th Battalion (Foot) of the corps artillery, held back until then, was also brought up into this new line. Only the 6th Heavy Battery remained in its position on the Ste. Marie—Auboué road. The batteries directed their fire on the hostile infantry in the foreground and which was falling back for the greater part into the main position between St. Privat and Roncourt.

North of the corps artillery there was, of the 45th Infantry Brigade, the 108th Rifle Regiment at the east corner of the woods of Auboué; north and south of that regiment the 100th Body Grenadier Regiment at the edges of the woods. The 101st Grenadier Regiment, whose 1st Battalion had executed a short advance in the direction of Montois la Montagne, had that battalion within the woods of Auboué behind the left wing of the other two regiments, and the 2d and 3d Battalions at the west edge of the woods.

The 46th Infantry Brigade still stood with the 1st Heavy Battery at Moineville. The 48th Infantry Brigade, which had been started for the envelopment of the hostile right wing by way of Auboué through the Orne Valley toward Montois la Montagne, just then passed Auboué toward the north and with it marched the 1st and 2d Cavalry Regiments and the batteries of the 23d Infantry Division, except the 2d Heavy Battery which soon thereafter hastened from the south corner of the woods of Auboué to rejoin the remainder of the batteries. The 48th Infantry Brigade was followed with some distance through Coinville by the 3d Cavalry Regiment and the Guard Cavalry Regiment of the 12th Cavalry Division, accompanied by the 1st Horse Battery. Each of these regiments had sent one squadron into the valley of the Mosel north of Metz toward Ueckingen¹ to destroy the railroad and telegraph.

In consequence of the previous events a remarkable shifting of forces had taken place in the XIIth Army Corps. The two brigades of the 24th Infantry Division were separated by a continually increasing

¹Uckange—Ed.

space caused by the 47th Infantry Brigade remaining at Ste. Marie aux Chênes and by the enveloping march of the 48th through Auboué toward Montois la Montagne. Between them was the 45th Infantry Brigade of the 23d Division at the woods of Auboué; behind this latter, quite a distance off, the 46th Infantry Brigade at Moineville.

The Xth Army Corps, held back in the second line, started toward 5.30 p.m. from Batilly in direction of St. Ail, which direction it had been previously ordered to assume. It was followed by the 5th Cavalry Division.

If we scrutinize the entire positions of the II^d Army about 5 p.m. we find the left wing, composed of the Guard and the XIIth Army Corps, still carefully kept back from the hostile main position, after the right wing, the IXth Army Corps, has encountered the enemy prematurely. The intention of using the Guard Corps simultaneously with the XIIth Army Corps, as soon as the latter had completed the envelopment, is clearly apparent. The front of the German left wing is formed by a long artillery line, reaching from the vicinity north of Habonville as far as the woods of Auboué, with interruptions at St. Ail and Ste. Marie aux Chênes. Four infantry brigades are in the center of the artillery line, alongside of each other, ready for the attack; a fifth one on the north wing; a sixth just about to envelop the enemy; while a seventh is still farther behind the front.

The enemy, after the fights around Ste. Marie aux Chênes and at the woods of Auboué, is engaged in drawing back the troops which had been pushed ahead of the main position with the exception of a few weaker detachments. This, together with the holding back of the Germans, caused the pause in the battle which took place at 5 p.m. on the right wing and also included the IXth Army Corps, where all offensive movements had ceased for the time being. A moderate artillery fire on the German side broke the silence, increasing whenever some promising target appeared in sight, as for instance, toward 5 p.m., when the hostile skirmish line advanced from St. Privat a short stretch toward St. Ail, apparently followed by a few squadrons.¹ The hostile guns were silent; but the infantry kept up the fire, even if only by single shots, with their long range rifles against the German infantry and artillery.

With great tension the leaders of the II^d Army awaited the moment when a continuation of the attack could be taken up. Prince Frederick Charles had halted on the hill southwest of Habonville, south of the Metz—Etain railroad; Prince August of Württemberg about 800 meters farther north on the ridge west of Habonville; the Crown Prince of Saxony west of Ste. Marie aux Chênes; and General von Manstein viewed the battle field of the Guard Corps from the north edge of the Bois de la Cusse.

¹ This observation, several times mentioned in battle reports, was undoubtedly incorrect.

ESTIMATE OF THE SITUATION AT HEADQUARTERS OF THE
GUARD CORPS AND IID ARMY. DECISION TO
ATTACK ST. PRIVAT

Prince August of Württemberg had at the very start been of the opinion that the Guard Corps should attack only when the Saxons had come near the enemy. With this idea in mind he had delayed the attack on the enemy's advanced position at Ste. Marie until a Saxon infantry brigade could interfere, although the 1st Guard Infantry Division was well able to make that attack alone. After the fall of Ste. Marie aux Chênes he sent directions to General von Pape to secure the possession of that village and that further action should be taken only on receipt of further orders.

When between 4 and 5 p.m., the enemy's artillery fire gradually ceased and the commander of the artillery of the Guards, General Prince zu Hohenlohe asked for further instructions, the reply was sent him, to save his ammunition for the critical moment and to keep up only a containing fire until one division of the Saxons going by way of Auboué and Montois la Montagne had reached Roncourt, from where they would attack the enemy in flank. He also informed him that it was not the intention to make a premature attack on the strong hostile position in front with only the twenty-two Guard battalions, which stood in Ste. Marie and at St. Ail. The fire of the artillery was to be very slow, unless hostile measures demanded a larger expenditure of ammunition.¹ The chief of staff of the Guard Corps, General von Dannenberg, had added to this that Prince Hohenlohe was to be notified as soon as the attack was decided on.

Thus Headquarters of the Guard Corps was well informed of events with the neighboring XIIth Army Corps. It was known to it that the Crown Prince of Saxony had extended the envelopment, originally planned to go around the woods of Auboué, still farther northward to beyond Montois la Montagne. Communication between the two corps by means of information officers worked well. The addition to the Prince's instructions to Prince Hohenlohe shows that it was intended to have the artillery support the subsequent infantry attack.

Corps headquarters had less information concerning the course of the battle of the IXth Army Corps. As early as 2 p.m. General von Manstein had sent information that it would be well, considering the hot battle of the IXth Army Corps, to leave a reserve at Anoux la Grange or at Vernéville. Shortly after 4 p.m. orders had arrived from Prince Frederick Charles to have the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade report to the IXth Army Corps. Thus there was every reason to view the situation of the IXth Army Corps as precarious; that conditions had materially bettered themselves with that corps in the fifth afternoon hour was still unknown.

Prince August knew that his intention of holding back the attack

¹History of the Guard Artillery, vol. 2; p. 141.

for the present coincided with the views of army headquarters and also with those of Royal Headquarters, as Prince Frederick Charles had personally informed him. It was clear to him that the intended envelopment, as actually being made by the XIIth Army Corps, would take some time; the day was beginning to decline and the IXth Army Corps had made no progress. With easily understood impatience the Prince directed his fieldglasses northward in the hope of seeing the Saxons appear east of the woods of Auboué.

From the Prince's location the French position, from the Metz—Etain railroad as far as St. Privat, could be distinctly seen; Ste. Marie could be distinguished behind St. Ail; and the outlook took in the entire future battlefield of the Guards south of the road from Ste. Marie to St. Privat. The view over the field north of the road was less clear, it being veiled by powder smoke. He could not see the vicinity of Montois la Montagne or Roncourt, and the great strength of the position at St. Privat was not entirely visible. But after 4.30 p.m. there were clearly discerned movements of hostile troops which appeared to be marching from Roncourt toward St. Privat.¹

In conjunction with the total silence of the hostile artillery these observations produced in Prince August the certitude that the enemy was weakening his main position. The object of this weakening might be either to fall back on Metz and thereby avoid defeat, or to reinforce the sorely pressed troops engaged with the IXth Army Corps. Both possibilities appeared undesirable: to allow the opponent to withdraw unbeaten meant the loss of an entire day filled with fatigue and sacrifices; a defeat of the IXth Army Corps, entailing probably a piercing of the center of the German battle line, would endanger the Guard Corps to the utmost. This estimate of the situation aroused in the already impatient Prince a frame of mind which caused him to look longingly forward to the appearance of the Saxons and consequent attack by the Guard Corps.

The Prince's estimate of the situation of the enemy was not shared by all officers of Corps Headquarters. The chief of staff, General von Dannenberg, also considered the enemy at St. Privat weak, not because of his sending troops back to Metz or to the support of the troops engaged with the IXth Army Corps, but because he believed that there were only weak troops there which had disengaged from the battle with the IXth Army Corps, probably in order to march off northward.

An additional mistake now wove itself into the erroneous conceptions which influenced the Prince's frame of mind. Crown Prince Albert had caused him to be informed that he would start the march at 5 p. m. for the envelopment of Roncourt—St. Privat.² From this report which came from the vicinity of Ste. Marie aux Chênes it could be calculated that the Saxon envelopment would become effective south

¹These movements in fact were the retrograde movements of the 75th and 91st Line Regiments from the west to the east toward the main position.

²Posthumous papers of General von Pape.

of Montois la Montagne at about 6.15 p.m. Prince August did not calculate thus; he took the information to mean that the Saxons would execute the enveloping attack on Roncourt at 5 p.m. His own impatience conduced to this conception and the course of events appeared to bear him out in it.

He saw how, about 4.45 p.m. Saxon batteries were taking position in the line between Ste. Marie aux Chênes and the woods of Auboué and apparently directing their fire on St. Privat. This apparently was the introduction to the immediate attack of the Saxons on Roncourt. The Saxon batteries were indeed still very far from the hostile position; the Saxon infantry was nowhere to be seen; but it appeared certain that the participation of the main body of the Saxon troops could now be counted on.

Prince August of Württemberg was clear in his own mind that a firm attack in front was necessary if this envelopment was to be successful. This meant a hastening of the attack. Other considerations also demanded special promptitude. The enemy's position was certainly no longer strongly held; it was only a question of a hostile corps which undoubtedly had participated in the battle of August 16th and probably had suffered heavy losses. It might be possible that the pressure of the Saxons against the hostile right flank would suffice to cause the enemy to take up his final retreat. Prince August felt a justifiable ambition of procuring for his corps its full share in the expected victory, especially as this 18th of August was the first chance it had had to encounter the enemy. If the Guard Corps was still to interfere with success quick action was necessary; a combined deployment of the Guard infantry and preparation of the attack by artillery could not be waited for. There had already been a certain artillery effect against St. Privat; the slow fire of the Guard batteries appeared to have been mainly directed against that village.

The Prince believed himself justified in giving the orders for the attack, as freedom of action had been left him in the orders from Prince Frederick Charles "to wait with his serious infantry attack until the XIIth Army Corps would be able to effectively interfere." He was just about to issue the necessary orders when Colonel von der Becke, the commander of the corps artillery of the Xth Army Corps, halted at Batilly, galloped up to get information concerning the battle situation. The colonel learned the Prince's intention to attack St. Privat and took the liberty of asking whether the Prince did not intend to have the attack prepared by artillery. The Prince replied that he could not now bring up his batteries for this, as they were otherwise engaged. The colonel urgently requested a short delay as he could within twenty minutes bring up the then available ten batteries of the Xth Army Corps and place them in position against St. Privat. This offer the Prince declined to accept with the remark that he could not wait for the bringing up of the batteries and delay the attack until they could have produced a suitable effect; for the envelopment of the

XIIth Corps undoubtedly would have a tactical effect very shortly and therefore the attack on St. Privat must be made at once, to prevent the enveloping attack from miscarrying. In addition, the day was now too far advanced to permit a postponement of the attack for, should it be longer delayed, there would be no time before darkness set in to gather the fruits of a success.¹

The Prince was firm in his decision to attack and gave orders for the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade to attack from St. Ail; the 1st Guard Infantry Division from Ste. Marie aux Chênes. The chief of staff, General von Dannenberg, undertook to report this to army headquarters and to issue proper orders to the troops.

While thus, in the Guard Corps, the intention of attacking hastily took shape and increased in intensity, the expectation at army headquarters that the decisive action would commence very soon, also increased to impatience. At 2.45 p.m. Prince Frederick Charles had sent Captain von Winterfeld to Royal Headquarters with the report that he thought of starting the attack at 3.45 p.m.² At that time he knew only that the hostile position extended to St. Privat and that Ste Marie was occupied by the enemy. The first thing then was to attack the latter village, but the attack on the hostile main position was being thought of in connection with this. But very soon there arrived the report from Crown Prince Albert of 2.30 p.m., according to which the 23d Infantry Division was to attack through Coinville and the woods situated between there and Roncourt, and the fact that Saxon troops were still seen marching south of Coinville made it plain that the enveloping movement would still take a considerable time. It could be concluded from the report of Crown Prince Albert that the French right wing stood farther in the north than St. Privat, a fact which could not be ascertained from Habonville. A rough calculation of time and distances showed that the Saxon envelopment would become effective about 5 p.m. The subsequent extension of the Saxon envelopment to beyond Auboué and Montois la Montagne was not known to army headquarters.

Waiting for the decision was not at all pleasant to Prince Frederick Charles. He remained of the opinion that it must come on August 18th in order not to leave the enemy time to form new intentions which could have as their objective only a getting away from the German envelopment, and now, after a weary march into position, only a very few hours of daylight remained to push through the decisive battle.³ Though the general situation could be viewed favorably, since the battle developed in accordance with the wishes of army headquarters, so far no decisive successes had been attained. In the IXth Army Corps, which had been engaged since 12 noon, all danger of a reverse appeared to have been overcome after strong reserves had been placed in readi-

¹Personal statement of Colonel von der Becke.

²As a matter of fact Ste. Marie aux Chênes was attacked as early as 3 p.m.

³Von der Goltz, *Die Operationen der II. Armee*, p. 147. (P. 73, ante.)

ness in its rear. General von Manstein also had sent in the report that the battle stood well since the hostile artillery had ceased firing and that his infantry was gaining ground.¹ Still the corps had not made very much progress and had suffered considerably. The only thing, not counting the comparatively easy capture of Ste. Marie aux Chênes, which could be viewed as actual success, was the silencing of the hostile artillery along the entire front from Folie to St. Privat; thus at least was the cessation of fire by the hostile batteries accounted for at army headquarters.² Therefore there had been accomplished at least one of the main requisites for the success of the subsequent attack; and this attack was anxiously awaited.

At army headquarters, as at Guard Corps headquarters, hostile movements were seen and taken to mean an evacuation of the country between Roncourt and St. Privat. It was believed that these movements were observed continuing to beyond St. Privat in the direction of Amanweiler.³ The thought once more arose that the IXth Army Corps, already in a difficult situation, was again threatened. When Prince Frederick Charles ordered von Voigts-Rhetz, the commanding general of the Xth Army Corps, which had halted at Batilly, to report to him, he had in mind utilizing that corps also in support of the IXth Corps.⁴ But other considerations induced him to draw the Xth Army Corps up to St. Ail as a reserve for the Guard Corps, as had been originally planned.

As the actual course of the Saxon envelopment remained unknown at army headquarters, reasons were sought to explain the non-appearance of the Saxons. Finally the supposition gained ground that the Saxons in their march by Coinville to Auboué had encountered a hostile departing echelon which attempted to escape in a northerly or northwesterly direction.⁵ Thus the old belief kept cropping up that the enemy's original intention had been to avoid a German attack by marching off to the north or northwest. The original deployment of the enemy between St. Privat and Ste. Marie appeared also to indicate that while marching between these two places he had been forced by the German deployment to make front toward the flank.⁶ This was the simplest explanation of the non-appearance of the Saxons. For some time the Saxon artillery had been noticed firing from the Ste. Marie—Auboué road apparently directed toward the north.⁷ Thus the enemy was there and was holding up the XIIth Army Corps. The subsequent change of position of the Saxon artillery to the Ste. Marie—

¹Von der Goltz, *Die Operationen der II. Armee*, p. 153. (P. 79, ante.)

²Statement of the (then) 1st Lieutenant von der Goltz, of the general staff of army headquarters.

³Von der Goltz, *Die Operationen der II. Armee*, p. 146.

⁴War Archives.

⁵Von der Goltz, *Die Operationen der II. Armee*, p. 147.

⁶Statement of the (then) 1st Lieutenant von der Goltz, of the general staff, II. Army.

⁷Von der Goltz, *Die Operationen der II. Armee*, p. 147.

Homecourt road was made gradually and was not perceived in its fullest extent.

From these impressions army headquarters came to the following general conclusions: the envelopment had come to a halt; the enemy had shifted troops in his main position at St. Privat to the south against the IXth Army Corps; this movement could be stopped only through an attack by the Guard Corps; but as that attack could not be supported by the Saxons, it was necessary to hold the Xth Army Corps in readiness behind the Guard Corps; for the rest, it was high time to seek the decision if the day was not to pass uselessly after having cost large sacrifices. The attack of the Guard Corps was not expected to be too difficult; the hostile artillery apparently had been silenced and the Guard batteries had directed their fire against the hostile position for an appreciable time even if intermittently.

Toward 5 p.m. General von Dannenberg rode across the railroad and reported to Prince Frederick Charles that Prince August of Württemberg was about to commence the attack. The commander in chief at once acquiesced with the intention of lightening the commanding general's responsibility for this grave decision.¹

He had just issued orders to General von Voigts-Rhetz to post the Xth Army Corps at St. Ail as reserve for the Guard Corps.²

As soon as the Guard infantry was perceived to be advancing on St. Privat, army headquarters crossed the railroad and proceeded to the plateau west of Habonville, remaining not far from the place where Headquarters of the Guard Corps had been.³

THE BATTLEFIELD OF THE 4TH GUARD INFANTRY BRIGADE AND THE ENEMY

The battlefield of the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade ascended in a slightly curved slope from St. Ail toward the high lying village of St. Privat and the heights south of it; on the south it was bounded by the ravine north of Habonville; on the north by the Ste. Marie aux Chênes—St. Privat la Montagne road, the densely leaved poplars on both sides of which prevented a good view over the terrain on the other side. Of the village of St. Privat, the church, some roofs and farm buildings, situated especially high on the southwest corner, were seen. Toward the east as far as the ridge, and toward the south beyond the ravine north of Habonville as far as the Bois de la Cusse, the view was open. The entire stretch, 2600 meters, from St. Ail to the heights of St. Privat offered no cover worthy of the name. The fields were bare, only a few furrows offered slight protection here and there. Of two unimportant meadow basins, extending into the field of attack from the north edge of the village of St. Ail, only the southern one, east of the St. Ail—Ste.

¹According to a statement of the (then) general staff officers of army headquarters, Count von Haeseler, and Lieutenant von der Goltz.

²War Archives.

³War Archives.

Marie road, offered a little protection against fire and sight for a stretch of some 200 meters. On August 18th the ground was hard and dry, so that striking bullets ricocheted.

On the enemy's side, the ridge extended prominently from knoll 328 at the southwest corner of St. Privat to the hill 321 on the south. The basin east of this elevation was absolutely covered against fire and view. The slope from knoll 328 was gentle and uniform to hill 321, sinking from there somewhat more steeply for the next 50 meters toward the south. This short declivity divided the battlefield of the French into two parts with different fronts; north of it were troops of the 6th Corps facing southwest; south of it troops of the 4th Corps facing west. The hostile infantry between the Ste. Marie—St. Privat road and the Metz—Etain railroad formed an extended front, supported by sufficient reserves. The somewhat advanced wing of the first line was formed by eight companies of the 93d Line Regiment of the 3d Division of the 6th Corps, which were distributed about 800 meters from the Ste. Marie—St. Ail road in the space between the Ste. Marie—St. Privat road and the depression running north from St. Ail. Behind them about 600 meters from St. Privat was the 3d Battalion of the same regiment deployed on both sides of the road, forming a connection with the troops north of the road. Next, on the left, were the three battalions 35th Line Regiment, 4th Division, 6th Corps; next the battalions of the 26th Line Regiment, the left wing of which was at the depression between the two knolls 328 and 322 south of St. Privat. Farther south to the Metz—Etain railroad the companies of the 20th Jäger Battalion, 1st Division, 4th Corps, had occupied the knoll 322, one kilometer northwest of Amanweiler. In front of the entire line were skirmishers whose fire was directed on the Guard batteries, on the troops of the IXth Army Corps at the Bois de la Cusse, and also on the dense masses of the Guard infantry, in so far as they were visible between Ste. Marie and St. Ail.

In the second line were, alongside each other, the 70th and 28th Line Regiments, 4th Division, 6th Corps, at knoll 328 immediately southwest of St. Privat, the 28th Regiment being about 500 meters behind the 26th Line Regiment. South of the 28th Line Regiment the space immediately behind the 20th Jäger Battalion, as far as the Metz—Etain railroad, was filled by the 57th Line Regiment, one battalion of the 73d and one of the 6th Line Regiments. A few hundred meters behind them was another battalion of the 73d Line Regiment. The other parts of the 6th and 73d Line Regiments were south of the railroad.

In the third line was the 1st Line Regiment on the St. Privat—Amanweiler road, its left wing near the railroad. The other side of the highroad, southeast of Jerusalem, was the Dragoon Brigade of the Cavalry Division de Gondrecourt.

The batteries which had been in action south of the St. Privat—Ste. Marie road still had their fighting power, but were somewhat short of ammunition. They had in greater part been taken back to the

quarries at Amanweiler; the three batteries of the 1st Division of the 4th Corps were halted with the 1st Line Regiment at the St. Privat—Amanweiler road. Two batteries from the main artillery reserve which Marshal Bazaine had sent from St. Quentin for support of the 6th Corps were approaching the battlefield.¹

THE 4TH GUARD INFANTRY BRIGADE ATTACKS

Shortly after 5 p.m. the chief of staff of the Guard Corps, General von Dannenberg, accompanied by Captain von Stülpnagel, arrived at St. Ail and brought orders to the commander of the 2d Guard Infantry Division, General von Budritzki, "to advance now simultaneously with the 1st Guard Division, which has already taken the village of Ste. Marie, to the attack against St. Privat, directing on the southern portion of the village of Jerusalem."² He then continued his ride to seek out the commander of the 1st Guard Infantry Division at Ste. Marie aux Chênes.

This order was transmitted by General von Budritzki to the commanding general of the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade, General von Berger. About this time that brigade was posted as follows: the Fusilier Battalion of the Königin 4th Guard Grenadier Regiment was immediately north of St. Ail; behind it the 2d Battalion, facing east; left alongside the Grenadier Regiment was the 2d Grenadier Regiment, also in two lines, the 2d Battalion in front, behind it the Fusilier Battalion, on the left the 1st Battalion. Of the 1st Battalion of the Königin Regiment, which had taken over the protection of the Guard Artillery, the 1st and 2d Companies were, in close order, on the east side of St. Ail; the 4th Company farther south deployed between the pieces; the 3d Company in the ravine northeast of Habonville.

In rear of the Guard Artillery was (of the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade in Habonville) the 1st Battalion, 1st Guard Grenadier Regiment, occupying with its 1st and 3d Companies the eastern edge, with the 4th and 2d Companies the village exit toward St. Ail.

General von Berger assembled the field officers of his brigade in the depression north of St. Ail and at 5.15 p.m. issued the following attack orders:

The brigade will advance south of the road on St. Privat and the hill to the south of it; the attack will be supported by the 1st Guard Infantry Division advancing north of the road. Each regiment, on the left the Franz Regiment, on the right the Königin Regiment, will send one battalion ahead in column of companies; the remaining battalions to follow in half-battalions and take up company column formation when entering the effective hostile fire zone.

There were no special directions given to seek connection with the 1st Guard Infantry Division as it was believed that that division had parts deployed north of the Ste. Marie—St. Privat road and only after entering the hostile fire was it noticed that that division had not

¹Bazaine had promised Canrobert only one, but he sent two batteries.

²War Archives.

yet started the movement.¹ The deployment of the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade was made on the St. Ail—Ste. Marie road with drill ground regulation intervals and distances. The entire brigade was to start simultaneously, directing on the high building at the southwest corner of St. Privat which was mistaken for Jerusalem.

During this deployment a minor attack engagement took place on the right wing of the Guard artillery. Here the 4th Company of the 4th Grenadier Regiment Königin had repeatedly attempted to throw back the annoying hostile skirmishers by rushes from between the pieces. These hostile skirmishers were about 800 meters in front of the artillery and greatly harrassed it with their fire. But each rush was called back by the artillery commanders themselves because they feared a masking of their fire. About 5 p.m. the fire of the hostile skirmishers increased again in volume, being directed by a French higher officer who had hastened up for that purpose.² The 3d Company of the Königin Regiment, which advanced in the ravine northeast of Habonville, succeeded in getting within range of the hostile skirmishers and driving them off by a rush forward after a rapid fire. This rush the 4th Company participated in on the left wing of the 3d Company, though at some distance from it, the attack being made in about the direction of hill 321 southwest of St. Privat. The shells of the Guard artillery, now once more able to fire actively, fell among the retreating French skirmishers.

This charge, however, would scarcely have succeeded had not other troops advanced simultaneously farther southward against the hostile skirmishers. The commander of the 2d Heavy Guard Battery, Captain von Prittwitz, had asked the commander of the 1st Battalion, Kaiser Alexander 1st Guard Grenadier Regiment, Major von Seeckt, then in Habonville, to drive off the skirmishers in front of the artillery. The latter, complying with this request, caused the 2d and 4th Companies to advance from the northern exit of Habonville in the general direction of St. Privat in such manner that they entered the fight south of the two companies of the Königin Regiment. A part of the hostile skirmishers were driven off toward the east. There remained, however, so many hostile skirmish groups still in the foreground of the hostile position that the charge of the four companies was brought to a stand by their hot chassepot fire. The companies remained with their right wing about 1400 meters southeast of St. Ail and took up their forward movement again only when the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade appeared on their left.

The deployment of the brigade had been completed by 5.30 p.m. In the first line of the Königin 4th Guard Grenadier Regiment the Fusilier Battalion had deployed the 10th and 11th Companies; behind these were the 9th and 12th Companies as a half-battalion; to the right of the

¹War Archives and statement of the (then) brigade adjutant, Lieutenant von Twardowski.

²This was Colonel Gibon, commander of the 1st Brigade, 4th Division, 6th Corps, who repeatedly rode down the skirmish line on a white horse encouraging the skirmishers to fire.

10th Company the 1st and 2d Companies had halted on the east front of St. Ail. In the second line was the 2d Battalion, formed in two half-battalions behind each other. The leading half-battalion consisted of the 5th and 7th; the rear one of the 6th and 8th Companies. On the left the 2d Battalion of the Kaiser Franz 2d Guard Grenadier Regiment had deployed in the first line like the neighboring Fusilier Battalion of the Königin Regiment: its 6th and 7th Companies deployed in front; behind the center the 5th and 8th Companies as a half-battalion. In the second line were the other two battalions, which subsequently deployed into half-battalions formed from the 9th and 12th, 10th and 11th, 1st and 4th, and 2d and 3d Companies. All leading companies of the first line of both regiments had deployed skirmishers. They had been cautioned against masking the artillery of the 2d Guard Infantry Division in position south of Ste. Marie aux Chênes. Thus deployed in a line extending from St. Ail north to about halfway to Ste. Marie aux Chênes, the start was made at 5.30 p.m., the regimental bands playing the attack march. General von Berger rode in the center of his brigade. He was followed by the division commander, General von Budritzki. The commander of the Königin 4th Guard Grenadier Regiment, Colonel Count von Waldersee, took the head of his 2d Battalion; Lieutenant-Colonel von Boehm of the Kaiser Franz 2d Guard Grenadier Regiment rode forward with the deployed skirmishers.

THE RIGHT WING OF THE 4TH GUARD INFANTRY BRIGADE
CAPTURES THE PROJECTING HEIGHT 321
SOUTHWEST OF ST. PRIVAT

When the brigade left the bottom north of St. Ail, the hostile infantry fire, until then desultory, greatly increased in volume, so that the losses quickly augmented. Involuntarily the troops pressed toward the two depressions leading from St. Ail eastward, though they offered little or no protection. On the right wing the 1st and 2d Companies, Königin Regiment, entered the southern hollow. The Fusilier Battalion marching on their left had first moved ahead between the two depressions, but soon sought out the northern one by making a left oblique. This caused in the first line of the Franz Regiment also a left oblique, which, however, was not executed by the half-battalions in the second line. The half-battalion marching on the extreme right, consisting of the 9th and 12th Companies, Franz Regiment, under Captain Siefert, in this manner got behind the Fusilier Battalion of the Königin Regiment and remained in connection with that battalion during the entire course of the battle. It followed it to the north edge of the northern basin and deployed two platoons when the Fusilier Battalion ahead deployed all the units of its leading companies a few hundred paces after crossing the St. Ail—Ste. Marie road when entering the hostile fire zone.

Through the manner of advance of the first line of the Regiment Königin a large gap was caused between the 1st and 2d Companies on

the right and the Fusilier Battalion on the left. Into this gap Colonel Count von Waldersee brought the 2d Battalion out of the second line. He had perceived the great strength of the hostile front and decided to attempt enveloping the enemy with at least one company. While the 6th, 8th and 7th Companies entered the gap, the 5th Company debouched to the right behind the 1st and 2d. Southeast of St. Ailit met the 3d and 4th companies, Regiment Königin, and the 2d and 4th Companies, Regiment Alexander, and joined their left wing.

Through this shifting among the Regiment Königin and the nearest neighboring parts of the Regiments Franz and Alexander, three battle groups were formed. While the northern group, consisting of the Fusilier Battalion, Regiment Königin, and the half-battalion Siefert, Regiment Franz, continued its march in and along the northern basin of St. Ail, and turned against the plainly visible hedges enclosing the field road leading from St. Privat across knoll 328 southwest, the two southern groups chose the projecting hill 321 farther southwest as their attack objective. The 1st, 2d, 6th, 8th and 7th Companies of the Regiment Königin, under leadership of Colonel Count von Waldersee, worked toward the west slope, following the southern basin with their right wing; the 2d and 4th Companies of the Regiment Alexander, the 3d, 4th and 5th Companies, Regiment Königin, under Major Rosenberg, commenced to press forward toward the southwest slope when the other group pressed them farther north.

During their forward movement the companies of the two southern groups were exposed without any protection to the devastating fire of the opponent; yet the hostile advanced skirmishers evacuated the field at all points. When the groups had gotten to within 1200 meters of the smoke enveloped main position of the enemy the companies threw themselves down and then continued their advance by rushes. At a range of about 500 meters from the enemy they commenced to reply to the hostile fire. At this time they formed but a single line with very few supporting troops in rear.

From this firing position the group under Major von Rosenberg, together with two companies of the Regiment Alexander, first succeeded in closing with the enemy, storming the southeast declivity of hill 321 in several rushes and under heavy loss. This success was made possible by the support of the Hessian detachments which had been advanced north of the Bois de la Cusse and held the enemy in check on hill 322 on the Metz—Etain railroad. The hostile infantry fell back before the charging Guard companies from the southern part of hill 321, partly in a northeasterly and partly in an easterly direction through the broad meadow ground running in the east into the depression between knolls 328 and 322 south of St. Privat. The companies of the Regiment Alexander on the right wing pressed hotly after the French infantry but came under the fire of the fresh hostile forces just appearing in the above mentioned depression, were forced to halt, and had then to fall back on the group under Major von Rosenberg,

leaving a large number of men behind, wounded and killed. The entire group, reduced now to five companies, crouched close to the ground on the southwest slope of the projecting hill 321, bending back the wings toward Amanweiler and St. Privat, and entered into a stationary fire fight with the superior enemy at 400 to 500 meters range.

Colonel Count von Waldersee, who, like the other field officers and captains had remained mounted and rode amongst the skirmishers of the group led by him, could partially overlook these events and came to the conclusion that the enveloping movement of Rosenberg's group had come to a standstill. As he considered it hardly possible, by a direct frontal attack alone, with his five companies to storm the west slope of the ridge, he sent the 1st and 2d Companies on the right wing of his group orders to draw to the right and turn to envelop the enemy. This movement was executed with remarkable order. In the meantime the colonel advanced with his three companies in front and, when the foot of the ascent was reached, the heights were stormed with hurrahs and beating of drums. Here also the hostile skirmishers gave way at all points. This charge led up the west slope of the ridge to a few hundred meters north of the Rosenberg group. Here the companies remained halted 300 to 400 meters from a new hostile line which was still advancing and returned the heavy fire which was poured on them. But as retrograde movements were observed in the dense hostile skirmish lines, Colonel Count von Waldersee now believed that success was his and sent orders back to bring up the cavalry to cut down the fleeing enemy.¹ However, the heavy losses which in very short time increased gruesomely, following the advance and the charge which had already been so costly, especially in officers, soon compelled Count von Waldersee to report personally to General von Berger that he would of course hold his position but was too weak to advance further. At the same time he sent word to the Guardartillery asking for support. Immediately thereafter he was disabled by a serious wound.

Though the enemy remained still numerically superior, the needle gun fire had a very good effect on his infantry occupying the country south of knoll 328 as far as the depression north of knoll 322. The east slope of the ridge, the western slope of which had been ascended, could in part be held under fire; the country could be overlooked to beyond the Amanweiler—St. Privat road. The retrograde movements out of the hostile skirmish line continued, especially from the vicinity of the previously mentioned depression.

One moment it appeared as if the advantages thus far gained would be endangered by an attack of French forces coming from the southeast against the Rosenberg group, but here the artillery interfered successfully. In spite of this the situation remained precarious enough. Farther northward the Fusilier Battalion of the Regiment

¹ The nearest cavalry stood in the ravine of Auboué.

Königin made but slow progress towards the hedge road; nothing was to be seen of an interference of the 1st Guard Infantry Division.

THE GUARD ARTILLERY SOUTHEAST OF ST. AIL ADVANCES
TO THE SUPPORT OF THE INFANTRY ATTACK

Towards 5.20 p.m. the fire of the Guard batteries under Prince zu Hohenlohe had again become more active in order to pursue the hostile skirmishers which were driven away from in front of the artillery by the charge of the 1st Battalion, Königin Regiment. Prince zu Hohenlohe and the commander of the corps artillery, Colonel von Scherbening, observed with satisfaction the effect of the shells on the previously annoying opponent. About this time the hostile fire increased at St. Privat and the heights south of the village which became enveloped in powder smoke. This freshly started fire was however not aimed at the corps artillery. The Prince asked the colonel: "What does this mean? For God's sake! Our infantry is attacking in front before the Saxons have completed their enveloping movement." Both artillery leaders were of the opinion that a more rapid fire would have to be directed on St. Privat.¹ In the meantime, however, the batteries had of their own accord directed their fire on the hostile skirmish lines which at first opposed the advance of the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade and soon all were again engaged in a hot fire fight against the hostile infantry and the artillery which entered the battle anew. Shell fire came from knoll 328 at St. Privat and from the east from knoll 322. The advance of the Guard infantry in the rising terrain soon masked the fire of a part of the batteries which did not dare to fire over the infantry at that long range. Finally, when the infantry climbed up the slope of the ridge southwest of St. Privat, it became necessary for these batteries to change position to the front in order to produce some effect on the enemy without endangering their own infantry.

Of the 1st Guard Foot Artillery Battalion which stood on the right wing north of the ravine of Habonville, the 1st Heavy Battery had turned its fire on the artillery which had just appeared on knoll 322 north of the Metz—Etain railroad, while the other batteries fired on the nearest infantry detachments. Chassepot bullets fell thickly on the batteries. When the masking of the fire by the forward moving group under Major von Rosenberg became effective, the 2d Heavy Battery of the left wing of the battalion first advanced straight to the front, but after covering 150 to 160 meters halted again under a heavy infantry fire, as going in this direction the heights in front hid all targets from it. With the words: "Here we shall all be killed without a return shot; so forward!" the battery commander, Captain von Prittwitz, led his battery to the half right past the front of his battalion to the southern spur of the projecting hill 321 where just then the Rosenberg group won a foothold under a heavy hostile fire. The exhausted horses dragged the guns partly at a trot, partly at a walk up the slope and the battery went into position on the right wing of the

¹History of the Guard Artillery, vol. 2, p. 142.

Rosenberg group in the very thin skirmish line of the 2d Company of the Regiment Alexander. Knoll 322 north of the Metz—Etain railroad, occupied by the enemy, first caught the eye of the battery commander; then he saw that strong, infantry masses in deep formation were marching across the northern slope of that knoll and the depression leading to knoll 328. As far as his eye could see toward the east the country was covered with advancing troops. It was impossible that the thin Prussian lines crouching on the southwestern slope of the projecting hill could unassisted oppose that advance. With three pieces which first came into position Captain von Prittwitz opened fire. The first round, at 600 meters range, struck a closed up body of troops, dispersing it. Hit succeeded hit. The effect increased during the further advance of the enemy as the other three pieces took up the fire and the neighboring companies of the Regiments Alexander and Königin made excellent use of their rifles. The enemy's leading line halted in the bottom west of knoll 322 and in part retreated across the depression eastward, pursued by shell fire. All danger however was not yet overcome, for the rear lines of the enemy were still pushing forward. The commander of the 1st Guard Foot Artillery Battalion, Lieutenant Colonel Bychelberg, had observed this and had brought up in all haste the 1st and 2d Light Batteries to join the 2d Heavy Battery. They unlimbered on the right of the latter battery, leaving between a large gap in which the 1st Heavy Battery took position a little later after it had abandoned the battle with the hostile artillery on knoll 322, having in the meantime taken an intermediate position in the direction of St. Privat. Thus the four batteries of the 1st Guard Foot Artillery Battalion were in the third position¹ south of the projecting hill 321 and directed their combined fire on the advancing hostile infantry. The first shots of the two light batteries were fired while the two hostile lines still pressed forward; but very soon the hostile attack broke completely under the effect of the batteries which were firing at their utmost speed. The French attack was twice repeated, but each time—and at longer ranges—broke under the effective fire of the Guard batteries. Strong hostile cavalry, forming southeast of St. Privat apparently for the advance, suffered a similar fate. With this the main task was completed. Still the batteries found opportunity again to interfere, farther south in the battle of the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade, and to fire on hostile batteries appearing northeast of Amanweiler, after the hostile batteries on knoll 322, had toward 7 p.m. disappeared for the second time.

The group of the wounded Major von Rosenberg, now commanded by Captain Vogel von Falckenstein, took an essential part in the repulse of the French attack. After the danger of a superior hostile attack had been overcome by the artillery, the infantry took up the battle against the enemy and the fight assumed a stationary character north of knoll 322. Farther south Hessian troops were seen gaining

¹Not counting a temporary position south of Habonville.

ground to the front. Some reinforcement came through the 1st and 3d Companies of the Regiment Alexander, which had accompanied the advance of the Foot Artillery Battalion from Habonville as escort. They took position behind the artillery line in the bottom and for a time suffered heavy losses there, as they formed a butt, so to speak, for the bullets intended for the batteries.

Only a few minutes after the 2d Heavy Battery had taken position with the Rosenberg group the 3d Light Battery, under Captain von Friederici, also brought direct support to the group under Count von Waldersee thus fulfilling the wish of the seriously wounded colonel. After the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade had started the batteries of the corps artillery had supported the infantry attack, partly from their former positions and partly by a change of positions to the front, as long as the terrain permitted this without danger to the troops, firing on the hostile artillery and infantry at St. Privat. In pursuance of a request from General von Budritzki, Colonel von Scherbening caused the 3d and 4th Heavy Batteries to follow up the advancing infantry into the hot rifle fire and take up a new fire position at the foot of the west slope of the projecting hill 321, about 1600 meters from St. Privat. The batteries suffered heavy losses while going into position, but were enabled to unlimber and direct their fire against the south edge of St. Privat. Of course the effect could not be perceived, as knoll 328 prevented sight. On their left the 2d Horse Battery arrived in a very short time and directed its fire on the hostile infantry and artillery south of the village. The 3d Light Battery also followed into this new position. Before it unlimbered General von Berger came up and called to the battalion commander, Major von Krieger, pointing to the half right: "My battalions can no longer hold out on that hill over there; artillery must go up there."¹ He had just received the verbal report from Colonel Count von Waldersee that his troops were too weak for a further advance. Captain von Friederici with the 3d Light Battery therefore turned at once to the right behind the 3d and 4th Heavy Batteries. While he himself fell mortally wounded from his horse the battery went into position with five guns about 15 meters in the right rear of the right wing of the Waldersee group under the hottest infantry fire. The cannoneers of the leaderless battery loaded with canister and commenced to fire on the opposite skirmishers. The last remaining officer, 2d Lieutenant Schmalz, hastening up, perceived however at a glance the great danger with which the French attack from Amanweiler was threatening the success thus far achieved by the Guard Infantry. Causing the pieces to be loaded with shells he had the guns fire on the more distant but more dangerous target. The first shots struck at 800 meters and had the best of effect, so that the nearby grenadiers of the Regiment Königin loudly rejoiced. The fire was continued on this target until the French advance from there was brought to a halt. Thus this battery took a leading part in the defeat of the French counter attack.

¹History of the Guard Artillery, vol. 2, p. 145.

All the batteries of the Guard artillery which had been engaged southeast of St. Ail had now changed position to the front. Five batteries participated directly in the infantry battle on a line with the skirmish lines of the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade on the western slope of the projecting hill 321 and its southern extension; three stood farther back between hill 321 and St. Ail and directed their fire on St. Privat. The 4th Light Battery, which last stood northeast of St. Ail, had lost connection with the corps artillery. On the other hand the 1st and 3d Horse Batteries, which up to then had been attached to the Guard Cavalry Division, hastened from Batilly through St. Ail and sought connection with the 2d Horse Battery, so that the entire Horse Artillery Battalion was together on the left wing of the corps artillery.

THE FRENCH POSITION ON THE HEDGE ROAD SOUTHWEST
OF ST. PRIVAT IS CAPTURED

The Fusilier Battalion of the Regiment Königin, executing with the half-battalion Siefert of the Regiment Franz the attack in and along the northern basin of St. Ail against the hedge road on knoll 328, found itself in a very difficult situation, though the hostile skirmishers in the foreground retreated without fighting seriously after having delivered a severe rapid fire. The hedge road had been occupied by infantry and artillery for about 700 meters from St. Privat. A strong fire came from there, having a partly flanking effect; enfilading fire also came from the Ste. Marie—St. Privat road after a larger part of the Regiment Franz had drawn to the left and uncovered the flank of the Fusilier Battalion of the Regiment Königin. Very soon the rear companies, the 9th and 12th, except a few platoons, entered the skirmish line of the 10th and 11th Companies which was prolonged on the left by the half-battalion Siefert. The advance was made by rushes during which parts of the skirmish line endeavored to facilitate by a hot fire the advance of the rushing parts. In this manner the six companies advanced slowly but persistently, in spite of large losses, though of course not as rapidly as the other battalions of the Regiment Königin. The closer the Fusiliers approached the enemy, the shorter became the rushes, the less the number of those arriving unwounded at the new position. Here also the loss in officers was comparatively high. About 250 meters from the central part of the hedgeroad the advance finally came to a stand, and a hot fire fight ensued on both sides.

At this time—it was between 6 and 6.30 p.m.—the battle stood favorably with the neighboring Waldersee group on the south. The ranks of the hostile infantry lying opposite it and the Rosenberg group became thinner and thinner, retreating in part on St. Privat and in part toward the north to knoll 328. The south wing of the hostile infantry, which occupied the hedgeroad and was about on a line with the left wing of the Waldersee group, parts of the 7th and 8th Com-

panies, could not be seen by the Grenadiers hugging the ground on the west slope of the ridge. That a strong enemy must be there was evident when turning the eyes to the left toward the hotly engaged Fusiliers.

The commander of the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade, Major General von Berger, wished to hasten the course of the battle after the artillery had interfered with apparent good effect. He therefore sent his adjutant, Lieutenant von Twardowski, the only officer besides himself still remaining mounted, to the thin skirmish lines of the Waldersee group to urge them to advance. From his horse Lieutenant von Twardowski saw the momentarily favorable position and the possibility of making an enveloping attack from the south on the defender of the hedge road. This appeared the more desirable inasmuch as the enemy opposed to the Fusilier Battalion was reinforcing from St. Privat. The movements of reinforcements were also perceived by the left wing of the Waldersee group. With renewed energy a part of the 7th and 8th Companies charged forward, turned toward the north and poured an enfilading fire on the reinforcements and now also on the defenders of the hedge road. In the meantime Captain von Trotha, encouraged by Lieutenant von Twardowski, gathered together the nearest skirmishers on the right wing of the Waldersee group and led them at double time from the south against the enemy on the hedge road. Supported by the fire of the 7th and 8th Companies he completely overran the left wing of the opponent. The enemy were so surprised that numbers fled distractedly to St. Privat and others allowed themselves to be taken prisoner without resistance.¹ As soon as the Fusilier Battalion, Regiment Königin, saw this flank attack, it and the half-battalion Siefert at once took up the attack, advancing as far as the hedge road. Nowhere did the enemy offer any material resistance; but an increased fire from St. Privat brought the charge to a halt. While the larger part of the French who had fought here fled in complete confusion to the protecting forest of Marengo, a smaller group still held knoll 328 immediately southwest of the village, and was supported there by the village garrison. Its rapid fire swept the ridge as far as hill 321. The hostile batteries which had fired for a while from knoll 328 had long since departed; but artillery fire still came from the southeast and east. Under these conditions it was impossible for the remnants of the forces of the Regiment Königin to continue the attack beyond the captured hill; still they kept up the fight, together with the half-battalion Siefert, in single groups, along the hedge road to within less than 300 meters of the south front of St. Privat and compelled the opponent to evacuate entirely the terrain in front of the village.

Between 6.30 and 7 p.m. the half-battalion Siefert, the Fusiliers of the Regiment Königin and parts of the latter's 2d Battalion, especially parts of the 7th and 8th Companies, kept the knoll 328 surrounded by

¹From statements of the (then) 1st Lieutenant von Twardowski to whom alone four French officers delivered their swords.

an arc open toward the northeast and cut through by the hedge road. Farther south, on the west and southwest slope of the projecting hill 321, were the Waldersee and Rosenberg groups still in their old positions, supported by five batteries of the Guard Artillery; only the Rosenberg group still had, on knoll 322, an opponent opposite it. Its attacking power was practically spent in consequence of its extraordinary losses and fatigue; but the first important success of the day had been achieved: the piercing of the continuous front of the enemy south of St. Privat; the separation of the 4th from the 6th Corps and therewith the latter's isolation in the space between Roncourt and St. Privat, which now was endangered from north, west and southwest.

THE ATTACK OF THE KAISER FRANZ REGIMENT, GUARD
GRENADIERS NO. 2, IS DIVERTED TO THE
STE. MARIE—ST. PRIVAT ROAD

The Kaiser Franz Guard Grenadier Regiment No. 2 chose, in accordance with orders, the southwest corner of St. Privat for its attack objective. As early as the first deployment north of St. Ail the regiment received a hot rifle fire with which artillery fire soon became mixed. In order not to show a large target, Lieutenant Colonel von Boehm caused the half-battalion of the first line, following up the skirmishers, to deploy in column of companies and the battalions of the second line in half-battalions. As, soon thereafter, the closed up companies of the 2d Battalion in the first line also deployed as skirmishers, the regiment extended over a large part of the space between the northern depression from St. Ail and the Ste. Marie—St. Privat road. Masking the fire of the batteries of the 2d Guard Infantry Division, in position south of Ste. Marie, was unavoidable. Through the left oblique of the southern neighboring Fusilier Battalion of the Regiment Königin the leading battalion also received an impulse toward the left and took up a march direction more to the northeast which finally resulted in a separation of the Regiment Franz from the Regiment Königin by a large interval.

The hostile skirmishers retreated in front of the advancing regiment from the foreground of St. Privat toward the road and opened a very annoying fire from the ditches alongside of it. Other hostile skirmishers deployed south of the road, met the regiment, and poured a hail of projectiles on it, and then again retreated. Serious losses, especially in mounted officers, occurred; but the regiment found some support through the effect of the batteries of the 2d Guard Infantry Division, farther in rear, in so far as their fire was not masked. Though the regiment remained unshaken in its advance, the hostile fire and the fatigue of the hot day compelled the skirmishers, as well as the following up half-battalions, to lie down from time to time and take up the forward movement again by short rushes.

In the subsequent advance of the regiment the hostile skirmishers on the road disappeared; in their place strong garrisons showed them-

selves in front of the west edge of St. Privat and knoll 328 south of that village, and the farther the regiment pressed forward in the angle between the road and ridges 328—321, the hotter became the hostile fire. About 1500 meters west of the village, 800 meters from the nearest hostile skirmish lines, the Grenadiers of the 2d Battalion opened the fire fight, probably without material effect, on account of the long range; still the skirmishers showed themselves calm and were completely in the hands of their group leaders. Thus later on it was not difficult to lead them by rushes closer to the enemy until the effect of the needle guns became effective in the hostile ranks.

The companies of the 2d Battalion were in numerical sequence alongside each other, deployed; behind them followed three half-battalions, while the fourth had joined the right wing of the Fusilier Battalion, Königin Regiment.

From the very start the Ste. Marie—St. Privat road with its ditches and densely leaved trees had exerted a certain attractive power over the Grenadiers without protection under the fire of the enemy. Added to this was the fact that the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade was seen advancing north of the road and the regiment involuntarily sought connection with it after connection with the Regiment Königin had been lost. The enfilading fire coming from the southern part of the hedge road southwest of St. Privat also drove the skirmish line, advancing by rushes, to the half left. Thus the 2d Battalion, deployed in a single line, after it had come to within 300 meters of the most advanced hostile skirmishers pressed toward the road and as far as possible sought protection in the ditches alongside the road, although these ditches were enfiladed by the enemy. Some single skirmish groups crossed the road toward the north. Front was taken partly to the north, partly to the east and fire opened against the enemy in front of the west edge of St. Privat and against the troops situated north of the road in the foreground of the village. The battalion was no longer a regular skirmish line, but a horde of skirmishers each one seeking cover against the hot hostile fire near the road. This swarm of skirmishers had long since become mixed up with parts of the second line.

One part of the second line, the half-battalion composed of the 10th and 11th Companies, had followed behind the right wing of the 2d Battalion and, though formed in time into column of companies, suffered just as many losses as that battalion. It pressed with the 2d Battalion toward the road but received such a heavy flank fire from the hedge road that it was forced to cling to the immediate neighborhood of the 2d Battalion and front against knoll 328. The flank fire continued until the hedge road fell into the hands of the Regiment Königin at 6.30 p.m.; only then could the half-battalion, with which was now only one unwounded officer, turn anew against the enemy west of St. Privat.

Like the Fusilier half-battalion the neighboring (on the left) half-battalions of the 1st Battalion after having for a time advanced with

it followed like it the general course of the road. While still engaged in this movement, they received orders from the rear to halt and lie down flat. These orders came from the brigade commander and were issued at a time when General von Berger had convinced himself that the attack of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade had not yet been started, and that a separate advance of the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade appeared fruitless considering the strong hostile front.¹ These orders reached only a part of the Regiment Franz, the 1st Battalion and the half-battalion Siefert with the Regiment Königin, as the adjutants charged with transmitting them had their horses killed by the hostile fire. The orders, however, were impossible of execution, as the hostile bullets laid down the law then, and thus an actual halt was made by the 1st Battalion, Regiment Franz, only when the ditches alongside the road behind the 2d Battalion had been reached.² A halt occurred of itself with the Regiment Königin and the half-battalion Siefert, but only after the edge of the plateau and then the projecting hill southwest of St. Privat had been captured.

By 6 p.m. the entire Regiment Franz was assembled on the road about halfway between Ste. Marie aux Chênes and St. Privat, holding the southern ditches on the road and the immediate terrain around in a depth extension of some few hundred meters. In front the 2d Battalion formed with its 10th and 11th Companies a narrow front facing St. Privat and knoll 328 and extending toward the north. Though heavy fire still came from the northeast and east there was some sort of protection against it and the fire could be replied to. There could of course no longer be any question of an orderly battle formation and connection; the fire had caused enormous losses during the unprotected advance. The small groups of men still able to fight gathered around the few still unwounded officers and awaited for more than an hour the final charge on St. Privat. In the course of time ammunition became so short that the dead and wounded had to be searched to help out.

THE GUARD BATTERIES BETWEEN ST. AIL AND STE. MARIE
ACCOMPANY THE ADVANCE OF THE KAISER FRANZ
GRENADE REGIMENT NO. 2

The 3d Battalion, Guard Foot Artillery³, engaged east of the St. Ail—Ste. Marie road, followed the advance of the Regiment Franz as soon as the regiment had passed it and there were perceived the enormous losses which the hostile fire caused in the ranks of the infantry. The change of positions was made by battery from the right wing, the batteries advancing about 400 meters and unlimbering again about 1800 meters west of St. Privat. The 6th Heavy Battery was very close on

¹War Archives.

²Guard Corps Headquarters issued no orders for a halt to the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade, even if the battle reports of the participating troops refer to orders from Corps Headquarters. The statement contained in the General Staff Account, page 865, is not correct. (English translation, p. 130.)

³Less 5th Light Battery, which was with the IXth Army Corps.

the left wing south of the road and received a heavy infantry fire from the ditches alongside the road for some time and until the subsequent advance of the Regiment Franz compelled the enemy to evacuate the ditches. The battery itself could not participate effectively, its fire being masked by the infantry which was continually pushing nearer the road. On its right the 5th Heavy Battery fired on the hostile infantry west of St. Privat, while the 6th Light Battery on the right wing turned its effective fire against the batteries which had appeared on knoll 328. The hostile artillery fire was not of much consequence.

South of the 3d Foot Artillery Battalion, the 4th Light Guard Battery which had lost connection with the corps artillery advanced deployed from the vicinity northeast of St. Ail some 400 meters, when the Regiment Königin had started in its front, and from its new position directed its fire on St. Privat. When the battery commander saw that the infantry attack came to a standstill, he again moved 400 meters forward towards St. Privat and then fired on the hostile batteries on knoll 328. Dense powder smoke precluded observation of the effect.

When the Regiment Franz pressed against the road the three batteries of the 3d Foot Battalion again advanced 400 meters farther northward. Personal orders for this advance were issued by the commanding general of the 2d Guard Infantry Division, General von Budritzki. This change of position put the battalion a few hundred meters behind the Regiment Franz. The 6th Heavy Battery crossed the road northward and took position with its right flank on the road. It could not fire, as German and French infantry obstructed its view, and it suffered from artillery fire coming from Roncourt. The other two batteries had remained south of the road and kept firing on the hostile infantry at the western entrance to St. Privat until they received orders to set the village afire.

In the meantime the 1st and 3d Horse Batteries of the Guard had arrived farther south on the left wing of the corps artillery. From the hedge road they received fire which caused some few losses, but were soon enabled—when the hedge road was captured—to turn their fire, in conjunction with the 2d Guard Horse Battery, uninterruptedly on the hostile infantry at St. Privat. The 2d and 4th Heavy Guard Batteries on their immediate right fired on the village itself, that is on the southern part, and occasionally on troops appearing in sight there. The effect of the fire was hard to determine, and probably was not very great.

Thus, in the second half of the seventh afternoon hour the entire Guard artillery was in the space between the Ste. Marie—St. Privat road and the Metz—Etain railroad behind the infantry division which had to thank the artillery for a large part of the successes so far attained. As the artillery was not brought up under one leadership the selection of positions as well as the selection of targets was left to momentary needs and chance. Still the artillery was able to support the reduced infantry, to secure what the infantry had attained, and

was in readiness for the final decisive battle around the village of St. Privat.

THE FRENCH DEFEND AND LOSE THE HEIGHTS SOUTHWEST OF
ST. PRIVAT

The leading line of the French infantry of the 4th Division, 6th Army Corps, which was the first to be struck by the attack of the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade, had remained inactive in its positions since noon, except that some of its advanced skirmishers had gained touch with the enemy. This long pause, in connection with the effect of the German artillery fire which poured over it from time to time, especially since the French batteries kept silence, had a very disadvantageous effect on the men though the losses were immaterial. To this should be added the knowledge that ammunition was very limited. When the deployment of German infantry between St. Ail and Ste. Marie aux Chênes was perceived—the nature of the terrain prevented this from being seen by all parts of the French line—the advanced skirmishers opened a hot fire, with the intention of falling back as soon as the German lines were seen approaching. The companies of the 93d Line Regiment, advanced on the right wing, turned back into the ditches alongside the Ste. Marie—St. Privat road and from there fired with an enfilading effect on the left wing of the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade, as also on the Guard batteries following it, until the advance of the Regiment Franz caused them to retreat on St. Privat. South of them the 25th Line Regiment deployed three companies of the 2d Battalion at the eastern end of the northern basin of St. Ail; to the right, skirmishers of the 9th Jäger Battalion and of the 1st Battalion, 70th Line Regiment inserted themselves in the space left by the 93d Line Regiment between St. Privat and knoll 328. The forward movement connected with this, which was perceived in its true light by the Regiment Franz, soon came to a standstill. A heavy rapid fire was delivered and thereafter the retrograde movement began. The power of resistance of the 1st Battalion, 25th Line Regiment, on the left wing, was the first to give out; it saw itself threatened by the enveloping movement of the group Rosenberg of the Regiments Königin and Alexander. The battalion retreated in the direction of St. Privat. On its left the 26th Line Regiment, which stood in front of the depression between knolls 328 and 322, also gave up all resistance when its skirmishers, sent against the Prussian artillery southeast of St. Ail, retreated in front of the German attack. The movement gained in volume toward the right, the 2d Battalion, 25th Line Regiment, retreating toward St. Privat after having once attempted, by deploying two companies, to support its leading line; it was joined by the advanced portions of the 9th Jäger Battalion and of the 1st Battalion, 70th Line Regiment. The longest to hold out was, in the center of the 25th Line Regiment, a part of the 3d Battalion, which retreated only at the final charge of the storming group Waldersee.

Thus the entire French advanced line had evacuated the field between the road and knoll 322 and allowed the attacker to ascend the west and southwestern slope of the projecting hill southwest of St. Privat. The place of the first French line was promptly occupied by the second line to again halt the advancing Germans. The 2d and 3d Battalions, 70th Line Regiment deployed on the hedge road and opposed themselves to the Fusilier Battalion, Regiment Königin. On their right, on knoll 328, the 3d Battalion, 28th Line Regiment took position and directed its fire on the Regiment Franz on the road. On the left the other two battalions of this regiment dispersed themselves at the north of the depression between knolls 328 and 322 and with a destructive fire prevented the progress of the group Waldersee and group Rosenberg, the right wing companies of which group had followed up the retreat of the 26th Line Regiment too incautiously. Along the entire line an infantry engagement ensued at short range supported by artillery fire. Of the batteries of the 6th Corps which had early evacuated the position south of St. Privat one returned to knoll 328 and took position at the hedge road. Farther south the two batteries sent by Bazaine from the artillery reserve went into position. They directed their fire only in part on the advancing German infantry and mainly on the numerous batteries which were perceived in the space south of the road alternately firing and taking position further to the front. The sun was so low in the sky that observation of the effect of fire toward the west was very difficult.

South of the 4th Division of the 5th Corps, the commander of the 1st Division, 4th Corps, General Courtot de Cisse, had again brought his three batteries into position on knoll 322 north of the Metz—Etain railroad as the Prussian Guard batteries resumed their rapid fire shortly after 5 p.m. Of course the French batteries brought their effect to bear only in a small measure on these batteries, for they fired mainly on the Hessian batteries at the Bois de la Cusse, the shells of which played havoc with the infantry of the 1st Division, striking also in the rear lines behind that division. In the second half of the sixth afternoon hour General Cisse observed the deployment and advance of the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade and now took hasty measures to come to the help of the left wing of the 6th Corps with an attack by his infantry. Two battalions of the 57th and one battalion of the 73d Line Regiments were drawn up from the second line and, crossing knoll 322, advanced against the group Rosenberg which had just gained a foothold on the southwest slope of the projecting hill 321. The 1st Battalion, 28th Line Regiment, joined this forward movement while the three batteries directed their fire in the attack direction. Under the fire of the German batteries which had hastened to the southern spur of hill 321, the attack came to naught halfway in the depression between knolls 328 and 322. Renewed endeavors and the throwing of three companies of the 1st Battalion, 6th Line Regiment, into the left wing of the attacking line were fruitless; the battalion fled back in panic. Here also the battle took the shape of a stationary infantry

engagement until the battalions of the Division Cissei which were participating in the attack were gradually taken back to behind knoll 322 into the second line.

In the meantime farther north, more and more parts of the French defensive line broke off and turned toward St. Privat; each man who had fired away his ammunition considered it his right to leave the position. The fire of the nearby German batteries and of the less numerous German skirmishers, who worked their rifles effectively had its effect. The 1st and 2d Battalions, 28th Line Regiment, were the first to leave the field north of knoll 322; the 3d and 2d Battalions of the 70th and 3d Battalion of the 28th Line Regiment held their positions longer behind the hedge road and on knoll 328.

There was, however, no intention of holding the position here at any price. On the request of the commander of the 70th Line Regiment the three batteries engaged here fell back; two of them—the ones brought up from the artillery reserve—took up a position 1000 meters farther east and later, like the third battery, fell back into the receiving position of the artillery of the 6th Corps at the quarries of Amanweiler. At 6.30 p.m. the Regiment Königin took the hedge road; the last resistance of the parts of the 70th Line Regiment defending it being made without vim. In contrast to that weak defense the 3d Battalion, 28th Line Regiment, which had directed an annihilating fire on the Regiment Franz on the road, evacuated knoll 328 only when all its ammunition had been fired away and then fell back on St. Privat in excellent order.

In this manner, in the second half of the seventh afternoon hour a large gap occurred in the French line of battle between St. Privat and the depression north of knoll 322. The troops which had filled that gap—the 25th, 26th, 28th and 70th Line Regiment, i. e. the entire infantry of the 4th Division, 6th Corps, had gradually retreated to behind Jerusalem or were now on the subsequent march toward the forest east of Marengo. The Dragoon Brigade of the Cavalry Division de Gondrecourt also left the vicinity south of Jerusalem, after having gotten under German shell fire in a forward movement. That the victorious German troops, after the capture of the ridge southwest of St. Privat, did not succeed in pressing through the occasioned gap is due on the one hand to the exhaustion of the victors and on the other hand to the artillery position at the quarries, occupied by numerous and steadily arriving French batteries whose fire swept the country south of St. Privat. North of the position captured by the Germans the strongly occupied village of St. Privat formed an unconquered bulwark while, on the south, knoll 322 was in the undisputed possession of the Division Cissei of the 4th Corps. Of course the larger part of the infantry of that division was badly shaken and the artillery about to drive off and the Hessian troops had by now approached that knoll to within a few hundred meters.

THE 1ST GUARD INFANTRY DIVISION RECEIVES ORDERS FOR
ATTACKING ST. PRIVAT

Since the cessation of the battle around Ste. Marie aux Chênes at 4.30 p.m., the troops of the 1st Guard Infantry Division had enjoyed a welcome rest which was not however entirely uninterrupted, as the hostile infantry fire continued, though less heavily. Unusual march exertions had been demanded in the last few days and the 18th of August had already exacted high efforts of the 1st Guard Infantry Division. On August 17th the Guard Corps had not entered its bivouac at Hannonville until 5 p.m.—a part of the corps later than that—after having spent half the night and the entire previous day either marching or waiting to resume the march. In the bivouac, rations had been short, the nearest water two kilometers distant. The start was made at 5 a.m. August 18th with a large part of the thirsty men having been unable to obtain a drink of water. The march from Hannonville to Mars la Tour was very fatiguing as a mass of vehicles obstructed the road.¹ At Mars la Tour also, where an involuntary halt lasting some three hours occurred, there was no water, and the attempt to have the men drink at Doncourt was interfered with by the continuation of the march. To reach the vicinity of Ste. Marie the 1st Guard Infantry Division had had to cover 18 kilometers and then in part had to bear the fatigues of the battle around that village.

General von Pape, commanding the 1st Guard Infantry Division, which with its infantry was crowded in at Ste. Marie aux Chênes, was in the village itself where he had established order and cared for measures of defense. He had instructions to delay further action until additional orders arrived. What the intentions of Army Corps Headquarters were he did not know, but, being nearest to the XIIth Army Corps, he could form a very good idea of the probable course of the battle. It was clear to him that an envelopment of the hostile right wing would be made and he had already considered that eventuality when he gained his first view of the hostile position from Habonville. What role his division would play in this he did not of course exactly know as he was ignorant of the plans of his two immediate commanders. He thought, however, that a frontal attack would not take place before completion of the enveloping movement. Thus the subsequent order for the attack on St. Privat by the 1st Infantry Division came upon him suddenly and, in spite of the long wait at Ste. Marie, found the division almost unprepared.

General von Pape at Ste. Marie had a far better view of the German left and of the French right wing than had Guard Corps Headquarters or Headquarters of the Second Army at Habonville. He knew that the Saxon 47th Infantry Brigade was northwest of Ste. Marie, the 45th at the woods of Auboué, the Saxon batteries south of those woods.

¹Recollections of General von Kessel. General von Pape denies in his posthumous papers that the road was blocked.

There could be no talk therefore of a completion of the envelopment of the French right wing and still less of an artillery preparation of the attack on the hostile main position. He clearly perceived that the fire of the Saxon batteries was directed on the hostile infantry in the foreground and that the very slow fire of the Guard batteries southeast of St. Ail in the fifth afternoon hour was, though occasionally turned on St. Privat, unsuited to shake the defender. The general sorely missed his own four batteries which had been attached to the corps artillery. There was not in his mind the dangerous illusion which possessed Prince Frederick Charles as well as Prince August of Württemberg who regarded the slow fire of the Guard batteries, the effect of which they could not sufficiently perceive, as in the nature of a preparation for the attack. To General von Pape who continuously observed St. Privat that village with its connecting heights north and south seemed to be of extraordinary strength and power of resistance, and he was convinced that the opponent would defend it stubbornly. He could perceive the strong infantry garrison on the southern heights and on both sides of the road in front of the village and saw the deployment of other hostile forces being made in all tranquillity farther north between Roncourt and St. Privat. On the other hand he felt certain that the enemy had no strong reserves behind his right wing. As early as his arrival with the 1st Guard Infantry Division at Habonville, when he could view the hostile position at St. Privat which he thought of enveloping, he had sent two well mounted officers, Lieutenants von Beyern and von Rundstedt of the Guard Hussar Regiment, with a few troopers to Auboué, Joeuf, Montois la Montagne and Malancourt to ascertain what if any of the enemy was in that vicinity. By 3 p.m. he had reports that those places were free of the enemy except for some stragglers; that Roncourt also appeared to be only weakly or not at all occupied; that immediately east of St. Privat were masses of infantry, artillery and also cavalry; that farther east were no reserves. General von Pape had not delayed in transmitting these reports to his own and XIIth Army Corps headquarters. After having observed the hostile deployments and shifting of troops at St. Privat he believed himself justified in assuming that the enemy had no reserves to speak of. Concerning the French artillery he was convinced that it had been silenced by the superior effect of the Guard batteries.

General von Pape realized clearly the difficulties of a frontal infantry attack without sufficient artillery preparation. Early on August 18th the commanding general of the IIIrd Army Corps, von Alvensleben, had told him at Bruville:

“The chassepot fire has been underestimated, and to some extent also that of the mitrailleuses. It is impossible for us to make any progress with our tactics taught on the drill ground. We must maneuver more; we must take advantage of every protection the terrain affords; and, above all, the artillery must produce a long and lasting effect. The French are very touchy on their flanks.”

A similar view had been expressed on August 7th at Blieskastel by Prince Frederick Charles when discussing with him the battle of Wörth, when the Prince stated that very material losses had been caused by the inconsiderate and impetuous pressing forward of the troops. He declared that maneuvering should have been more resorted to and that the bull should not have been taken by the horns as it had been.¹ General von Pape had made a successful attempt to conform to these counsels and experiences in the battle around Ste. Marie aux Chênes.

The commanding general of the Guard Corps, Prince August of Württemberg, had proceeded with his staff to Ste. Marie as soon as the chief of staff, General von Dannenberg, had ridden to St. Ail to start the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade into motion. The Prince rode behind that brigade's front and, entering Ste. Marie from the west, met General von Pape on the village street, and said to him: "You will now attack St. Privat with your division and capture it." This was exactly at 5.30 p.m. General von Pape advanced the objection, due to his better knowledge of conditions on the French right wing, that no shell had as yet been fired into St. Privat and that the attack would be difficult of execution. The Prince replied that the corps artillery had fired on the village for the last hour. General von Pape denied this in the following words: "Excuse me; the corps artillery has been silent for the past hour; St. Privat is entirely intact." Thereupon the Prince insisted: "The Crown Prince of Saxony has informed me that he would attack Roncourt at 5 p.m. It is now 5.30 p.m.; we will be too late. All you have to do is to move forward." Once again General von Pape objected that the larger part of the XIIth Army Corps was not yet in motion and added: "Your Royal Highness can see both this as well as the silence of the artillery, if you will ride a short distance out of the village." The Prince cut short any further objections with the words: "No, no, the Crown Prince has said it, and over there"—pointing toward St. Ail—"the other division is now advancing, it will be isolated; hurry up, now; everything takes so long with you."²

General von Pape wheeled his horse and left Ste. Marie to ride to the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade. In front of the village General von Dannenberg met him and gave him the most elevated buildings of St. Privat as his objective of attack.

General von Dannenberg had just come from the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade. This brigade, to avoid losses, was lying flat on the ground 400 meters southwest of Ste. Marie aux Chênes. On the right was the 3d, on the left was the 1st Guard Regiment; all facing the village. In both regiments the Fusilier battalions with advanced wing companies formed the first line; the second battalions were in half columns in the second line, behind them in the third line the also deployed first battalions. The brigade had been in this place for almost

¹Posthumous papers of General von Pape.

²Posthumous papers of General von Pape.

two hours without any knowledge of the battle situation or of the intentions of the higher commanders. In view of the march to the front and of the present front direction, the brigade commander, General von Kessel, had assumed that he would have to advance northward or northeastward. He knew that Roncourt and St. Privat were occupied by the enemy; both these villages according to his view were in the flank of the subsequent attack direction. He did not know in what manner the XIIth Army Corps, farther to the north, would be utilized, and heard several times that his brigade would have to wait on that corps. He could perceive no strong hostile forces northward; but he believed it improbable that St. Privat would be the next attack objective; still that possibility was discussed at brigade headquarters. As an attack south and east around Ste. Marie was considered to be impossible he sent his orderly officer, Lieutenant Count von Pfeil, of the 1st Guard Regiment, to reconnoiter the country to the west around Ste. Marie aux Chênes. This officer rode beyond the north edge of the village and viewed the ravine of Homecourt and the cross ravines running into it from the east and which appeared to favor an approach on St. Privat, but he had to return on being hotly fired on by advanced hostile skirmishers. Very soon what was thought impossible became an actuality, for a general staff officer of the 1st Guard Infantry Division, Captain von Holleben who was seeking out the chief of staff of the Guard Corps in the vicinity of St. Ail, rode past and said that the brigade would probably very shortly receive orders to attack St. Privat. Soon after General von Dannenberg himself rode up to General von Kessel, pointed to the high buildings of St. Privat and said: "The brigade will advance on the other side of the road and attack together with the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade. That brigade is already engaged; the 1st Brigade must hasten to get ahead." General von Kessel replied: "That will hardly be possible; the brigade has been halted here for the past hour and a half; we have seen several intact battalions of French infantry deploying on the heights of St. Privat in line and then apparently lying down in skirmish trenches."

"Those are troops beaten by the IXth Corps!" maintained General von Dannenberg.

"No!" answered General von Kessel. "They are intact and have not been fired on by artillery."

General von Dannenberg again declared with great positiveness: "We attack. If we do not take St. Privat, the Saxons will get it ahead of us. The brigade will reap the harvest of to-day."

General von Kessel pointed with his finger in the direction of Auboué: "There the Saxons are marching; they are still far off; I am awaiting orders from the division."

General von Dannenberg continued his ride toward Ste. Marie. General von Kessel remained in doubt as to what he meant by "harvest of to-day," and concluded that, contrary to his better knowledge,

Corps Headquarters was under the impression that at St. Privat it would have to do with defeated, thoroughly shaken troops.¹

Shortly after 5.30 p.m. General von Pape rode up to the right wing of the brigade and ordered General von Kessel "to start for the attack with the brigade, directing on the highest building in St. Privat." General von Kessel inquired what would be utilized for the support of this attack and received the answer: "Only the 4th Brigade on your right flank. The 2d Brigade and advance guard remain at Ste. Marie aux Chênes." Captain von Holleben repeated the same orders to the brigade adjutant.

While General von Kessel turned to the officers of the brigade who had been called together General von Pape directed the commander of the 2d Guard Regiment, Colonel von Kanitz who was with him, to follow with the 2d Guard Regiment the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade, overlapping it on the left, 400 meters distance. The division commander intended to keep the 4th Guard Regiment in Ste. Marie in readiness at his disposition to throw it in where support seemed necessary or where an especially favorable attacking object showed itself. The Guard Fusilier Regiment and the Guard Jäger Battalion were to remain in Ste. Marie aux Chênes to receive the remaining troops of the division in case of an unfavorable outcome of the battle.²

* * *

THE DEFENDERS OF THE ST. PRIVAT POSITION

With the French troops north of the Ste. Marie—St. Privat road the retrograde movements connected with the advance of the 75th and 91st Line Regiments against the Saxons between Ste. Marie and the woods of Auboué had been fully completed before 5.30 p.m. The only two battalions which had remained in front, opposite the ravine of Homecourt, the 2d and 10th Line Regiments of the 1st Division, and the 1st and 91st Line Regiments, 3d Division, 6th Corps, suffered from the fire of the Saxon batteries which had come to within 1000 and 1500 meters through a change of position to the Ste. Marie—Homecourt road. Seven hundred and fifty meters behind them was a second line with large gaps in it; west of Roncourt, with weak skirmishers deployed, was the 1st Battalion, 75th Line Regiment; 1000 meters farther south, 500 meters west of the west front of St. Privat, were the 2d and 3d Battalions, 91st Line Regiment, fully deployed; on a line with them, 300 meters farther south, the 3d Battalion, 93d Line Regiment on both sides of the Ste. Marie—St. Privat road. The skirmishers of the last three named battalions had been advanced westward as far as the edge of the terrace in front of St. Privat. The battalions in the second line all pertained to the 3d Division, 6th Corps. In the succeeding third line and in the reserves, troops of the 1st, 2d and 3d Division were mixed.³

¹Recollections of General von Kessel and of the (then) adjutant of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade, Lieutenant von Mitzlaff.

²Posthumous papers of General von Pape.

³Of the 2d Division, 6th Corps, only the 9th Line Regiment was present.

On the northwest edge of Roncourt stood the 1st Battalion, 9th Line Regiment; halfway between Roncourt and St. Privat the 2d and 3d Battalion, 75th Line Regiment. The 3d Battalion, 10th Line Regiment was divided into two half battalions and was behind the group formed by the 2d and 3d Battalions, 91st Regiment, in the second line. A short distance to the south the 1st Battalion, 10th Line Regiment connected between it and the garrison of St. Privat. The field walls in front of the west side of the village were occupied by riflemen of the first battalions, 93d and 94th Line Regiments¹; the houses, visible from far off, on the southwest corner by the 9th Jäger Battalion. In the village proper was the 3d Battalion, 9th Line Regiment at the northern exit and the entire 12th Line Regiment distributed in the buildings between the north exit and Jerusalem. As reserve, behind St. Privat, at the northeast corner of the village, were the 4th Line Regiment and the 3d Battalion, 100th Line Regiment whose other two battalions were east of Jerusalem. Of other troops there were still present the 2d Battalion, 9th, two and one-half battalions, 94th Line Regiment, three regiments of the Cavalry Division du Barail² and four batteries. The Horse Battery which had accompanied the attack of the 75th and 91st Line Regiments had returned to the quarries at Amanweiler shortly after 5 p.m. These troops were hidden from sight and from the hostile fire in the bottom east of the Roncourt—St. Privat ridge. The batteries had for some time completely ceased firing.

The grouping of the French fighting forces north of the road in several lines behind each other had become much confused under the effects of the battles around Ste. Marie and the approach of the Saxons, and organizations were badly mixed. The thin advanced lines were given the task of delaying the German attack, and this, with the distribution of forces in the third line and the strong massing of troops in and at St. Privat, clearly indicated that this village and not Roncourt formed the right wing of the position which was to be held under any and all circumstances. Neither Roncourt nor the ridge between the two places was sufficiently occupied to make a strong stand against pressure coming from the north and northwest.

THE 1ST GUARD INFANTRY BRIGADE STARTS FOR ST. PRIVAT

When General von Kessel received orders to attack St. Privat, first from General von Dannenberg and then from General von Pape, he was much surprised that his brigade should make the attack in the undesirable direction around the east of Ste. Marie, but abstained from making any remark to the division commander and believed that he could best solve his task by carrying it out literally. After his discus-

¹Of the first Battalion, 93d Line Regiment were four companies inserted here; two companies were farther south on the St. Privat—Ste. Marie road advanced toward St. Ail. Of the 1st Battalion, 94th, three companies were here; three had taken part at Ste. Marie.

²In the meantime reinforced by the 3d Chasseur Regiment from the Cavalry Division of the 3d Corps.

sion with General von Dannenberg he had called all mounted officers together and pointed out to them the high houses of St. Privat as attack objective which should be kept to under all circumstances. He now divulged to the regimental commanders the orders given by the division commander and added thereto that the attack was to be made by two one-eighth turns, one this side, the other the other side of the road, thus gaining the front toward the attack objective; skirmishers to be sent ahead after the completion of the first turn.¹

At 5.45 the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade left its position where it had been echeloned in three lines facing Ste. Marie, and started in the direction of the objective, after the brigade adjutant Lieutenant von Mitzlaff had ridden to the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade—which was known to be on the move south of the road—to report to it that the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade would interfere.² The Fusilier Battalion of the 4th Guard Regiment on the right wing was the base battalion of the first line. Shortly after the start General von Kessel gave the command for the first one-eighth turn to the right, and the mass commenced to turn against St. Privat. In this turn distances and intervals were nearly completely lost, as the left wing had to pass close by Ste. Marie. In the meantime General von Kessel got a view of the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade and saw that it was pressing closer and closer to the road. Calculating that if he kept to his present march direction his brigade would get behind the left wing of the other he endeavored to gain more room toward the left.

After the completion of the first turn the advanced wing companies of the two Fusilier battalions in the first line had deployed skirmishers on the run as per orders. As the brigade itself remained on the move the skirmishers were not sufficiently advanced and the brigade still presented an undeployed and unbroken mass the rear lines of which pressed together to the right as they passed Ste. Marie. General von Pape sent his general staff officer, Captain von Holleben with orders to allow the skirmishers to gain more room to the front and to deploy the brigade; the same orders came from Prince August of Württemberg who had ridden as far as the east exit of Ste. Marie. General von Kessel endeavored to have the brigade mark time, to give the skirmishers the desired interval ahead; three times he sent corresponding orders to the base company of the first line³—but without result. The brigade was not deployed; hostile bullets commenced to rain and everybody pressed forward. In the meantime the rear lines had left Ste. Marie behind, and General von Kessel considered that the moment had arrived to draw the brigade farther to the left. He gave the command: "Half left; march" first as the left wing of the brigade had commenced to cross the road in its original march direction

¹Recollections of General von Kessel and of the (then) 1st Lieutenant von Mitzlaff.

²Lieutenant von Mitzlaff encountered the adjutant of the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade, Lieutenant von Twardowski, who gave him the first report of the heavy losses suffered by the Brigade.

³12th Company, 3d Guard Regiment.

pointed halfway between Roncourt and St. Privat. The turn to half left forced the still massed brigade to cross the deep road ditches obliquely. The half left soon changed into a left turn and, while the Regiment Franz in its front sought cover on the road, the brigade moved past the east of Ste. Marie in a northeasterly, almost northerly direction and thus offered its right flank to the defenders of St. Privat.

Though hot hostile fire greeted the brigade from the beginning of its advance, that fire now became still hotter. West of St. Privat the leading hostile line proclaimed its presence by a white smoke line which suddenly arose from the ground. Heavy artillery fire joined this infantry fire from near the north of St. Privat and shells also came from close south of the village. Under the effect of this fire, which caused numerous and rapidly increasing losses, the movement of the brigade gained so much in momentum that the columns of the right wing had to cross the road at the run to keep up in front. The brigade had therefore arrived at a considerable distance beyond the road when the attempt was made to change the front, which was turning gradually more and more toward Roncourt, toward its proper attack objective. At the southern of the two meadow basins running north of the road against the west front of St. Privat the brigade came to a short halt to restore order and make the turn, as well as to make the needed deployment. But the very opposite was accomplished. The enormous hostile fire crushed the battalions together, especially those of the second line which struggled to reach the northern basin with its promise of at least some protection.

The losses increased so much that there could no longer be any question of a single leadership, especially as the leaders commenced to fall. It was only possible to make the leading line of the two Fusilier battalions assume a gradual turning toward St. Privat; the lines in rear, after a few attempts at a turn to the right, took up again the movement to the left as if to try by this shifting sideways to avoid the annihilating fire coming from St. Privat.¹ Thus the mass of the brigade, suffering enormous losses and attempting continually but in vain to deploy, moved farther to the north and northeast until the northern meadow basin opposite the northwest corner of St. Privat had been reached. Only from here on did the front of the first line take full direction on the village and the road leading to Roncourt.

General von Kessel had been able to effect the turn of the Fusilier Battalions; the rear echelons he left in their left oblique in the hope that thereby they would find some protection in the terrain. He himself, riding in the center of the brigade between the second battalions, considered it of the utmost importance to drive the leading lines and echelons, deprived of their officers, uninterruptedly forward, and endeavored to get as close to the enemy as possible to make use of the rifles. The two regimental commanders, Colonel von Roeder of

¹"It was a movement like that of a single man who, breasting a heavy rain and wind, involuntarily stops and tries to get ahead by a movement to the side."—Recollections of (then) Captain von Holleben, general staff officer of the 1st Guard Infantry Division.

the 1st and Colonel von Linsingen of the 3d Foot Guard Regiment, rode with their Fusilier battalions and supported the brigade commander.

After the last left oblique and turn the brigade had assumed about the following formation: the partly deployed Fusilier battalions of both regiments were with their right wing about 300 to 400 meters from the road, about 500 meters from the hostile skirmish line which had been advanced to the edge of the terrace west of St. Privat. The battalions in the second line had obliqued to the left, so that on the right wing the 2d Battalion, 3d Guard Regiment marched behind the gap between the two Fusilier battalions of the first line. The third line had similarly obliqued to the left. The Fusiliers faced east, the lines behind in part east, in part northeast. While the skirmishers fired, the brigade moved forward by rushes. Skirmishers and columns frequently had to lie down to gain breath, but quickly arose again at the word of command. The enormous loss sustained undoubtedly had a disadvantageous effect on the men. Each time the hostile fire increased the lines threw themselves down, or the men became panicky and huddled together in lines behind each other as if the rear line wanted to seek cover behind the one in front. But in general a single command sufficed to reestablish order. The men advanced with body bent down and face turned away, as if seeking protection in a hail storm; their expressions were often much disfigured. Where officers still were present their example had such effect that there was no visible timidity; but where there were no officers it was plainly perceptible that in difficult situations of deployment officers are absolutely required to inspire valor and confidence in the men.¹

All trumpeters sounded their trumpets, all drummers beat their drums; General von Kessel called without interruption: "Forward! Forward!" Thus the brigade gradually came so close to the enemy that it was enabled to use its fire at a favorable range and then also began a grouping of the dwindled and hitherto orderless forces into different battle formations which of course were adopted less because of orders of leaders than because of the momentary inspiration of the men themselves.

THE SAXON ARTILLERY SUPPORTS THE ADVANCE OF THE 1ST GUARD INFANTRY BRIGADE

When the four batteries of the Saxon 24th Infantry Division took position at 5 p.m. in the space between the corps artillery in the north and the village of Ste. Marie in the south, a part of that artillery was already firing on the hostile batteries which had appeared anew on the ridge between Roncourt and St. Privat. Toward that target the 4th Light and 4th Heavy Batteries also turned going into position with their right wing near Ste. Marie with the intention of firing on the hostile batteries the fire from which appeared to be greatly hindering

¹From Recollections of General von Kessel and other eye witnesses.

the advance of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade. The 3d Light Battery, going into position on their left, received orders from the battalion commander to support the attack of the Guard on St. Privat and to prepare that on Roncourt. It directed its fire on hostile infantry in motion in the vicinity of Roncourt and threatening to flank the attack of the Guard. The last arriving 3d Heavy Battery, taking position between the 3d Light and the right wing of the corps artillery, arrived at a time when a part of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade had already turned against Roncourt and it then threw shells on the hostile infantry in front of that village. It fired only eight rounds, however, as, in consequence of a misunderstanding of orders, the entire battalion of artillery followed up the 47th Infantry Brigade which had been called by Crown Prince Albert from Ste. Marie to the woods of Auboué. Thus the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade did not have a continued support from the Saxon artillery.

THE 2D GUARD REGIMENT IS INSERTED

The staff of Headquarters, Guard Corps observed the advance of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade from the eastern edge of Ste. Marie. The violence of the fire which met the brigade took Prince August of Württemberg by surprise as he had supposed that only weaker forces were in the village of St. Privat. And as yet nothing could be seen of the anxiously expected interference of the Saxons. Captain von Lignitz, arriving from Headquarters, IXth Army Corps with the request of General von Manstein to hasten the offensive of the Guard Corps, was asked if the IXth Army Corps was in a position to give up again the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade attached to it. Captain von Lignitz answered this question in the negative.¹ Prince August of Württemberg therefore had no reserve with which to influence the battle of the Guard Corps thus commenced under unfavorable conditions.

General von Pape had followed the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade on the Ste. Marie—St. Privat road. He was surprised not so much at the intensity of the hostile fire—which he had foreseen—as at the manner and method in which the brigade advanced in a dense mass without paying any attention to the hostile fire effect. What appeared to him to be the most serious thing was the swerving of the brigade from the ordered attack direction on the southwest corner of St. Privat. Instead of striving for that point the brigade, by a sharp left oblique, turned more and more toward Roncourt and thus continually widened the interval separating it from the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade which was with its left wing on the road opposite the south part of St. Privat. There was in consequence a part of the hostile line not covered by German troops and there could be no question of combined action between the 1st and 2d Guard Infantry Divisions. General von Pape felt it necessary to throw fresh troops into the gap and for this designated the 2d Guard Regiment which had been originally directed to

¹Von Lignitz; *Aus drei Kriegen*. Part II, p. 41. As a matter of fact, Headquarters Guard Corps had already sent orders to the brigade to attack.

follow in echelons to the left of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade. This order agreed with the wishes of the regimental commander, Colonel von Kanitz, who was riding with him and had perceived the gap and suggested utilizing his regiment to fill it.¹ In consenting General von Pape directed the colonel to insert the regiment as rapidly as possible alongside of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade and to conduct the attack along the road. Thereupon the colonel proceeded to his regiment which, started on the move by the regimental adjutant, was now advancing south of Ste. Marie.

This caused the reserve of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade to take position in the first line and a new reserve had to be formed for the first line from the troops still held in Ste. Marie. With this object General von Pape rode back along the road to that village. En route he tried unsuccessfully to induce several bodies of leaderless troops of the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade, which were fleeing wildly back on the road, to return into the battle; he was unable to influence them, the men acting as though blind and insane.²

THE ATTACK OF THE 1ST GUARD INFANTRY BRIGADE DIVIDES ITSELF ON RONCOURT AND ST. PRIVAT

The Fusilier Battalion, 3d Foot Guard Regiment, on the right wing of the first line of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade, had, when about 200 meters north of the road and while still running and obliquing to the left, commenced to execute the second one-eighth right turn toward St. Privat. As it had the shortest road distance to cover it was the first to come into touch with the enemy, whose fire had already caused serious gaps. The gradually executed movement of the turn, which because of the obliquing to the left led more and more away from the road, changed under the effect of the hostile fire and after the correct front had been to some extent established into an advance by rushes against the northwest corner of the village. The advanced wing companies, the 9th and 12th, which thus far had sent ahead only one platoon of skirmishers each, now completely deployed as skirmishers. The other half battalions followed in close order. In their front the Fusiliers saw the smoke-revealed position of the enemy whose fire could not yet be replied to; on their right front parts of the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade were engaged in battle. When the forward movement of the skirmishers came to a stand under enormous losses the closed half-battalion followed up by order of Colonel von Linsingen and carried the skirmishers forward to within 500 meters of the most advanced hostile skirmish line. The battalion, now fully deployed, gathered around its colors, lay down, and commenced to reply to the hostile fire. In two additional rushes it came to within 250 meters of the enemy and could use its rifles effectively. By this time the battalion numbered only 3 officers and 250 men. On its right the country was entirely open for a stretch of some

¹Communication from (then) Colonel Count von Kanitz.

²Posthumous letters of General von Pape.

400 meters to the road; on its left a gap had opened into which entered the 2d Battalion, 3d Guard Regiment.

This latter battalion had followed the Fusilier Battalion at some distance which had been steadily diminished by the different turns and obliques. Its half-battalions, in column of half-platoons, were at first alongside each other, later, after the crowding together of the second line in the northern meadow strip, behind each other. At this place the battalion suffered the heaviest losses. From here the two leading companies, the 7th and 5th, after having completely deployed as skirmishers, reached, by repeated rushes, the open space on the left of the Fusilier Battalion and, under command of the single unwounded officer, Lieutenant von Kracht, took up the fire against hostile skirmishers in position west of the churchyard of St. Privat. The other two companies, the 8th and 5th, saw themselves in a very short time deprived of all their officers and dispersed completely. Only separate groups of skirmishers later on joined the line of the leading companies.

On the left of the 2d Battalion, 3d Foot Guard Regiment, the Fusilier Battalion, 1st Foot Guard Regiment was engaged. It had been given the same formation as the Fusilier Battalion of the sister regiment which had originally been on its immediate right: the wing companies, the 12th and 9th, had been advanced and each had deployed one platoon; the other companies followed as half-battalion in column of companies. Soon after the first one-eighth turn south of the road the skirmishers commenced to oblique to the left to avoid crowding to the right, thus causing the large gap which later on separated both Fusilier battalions of the brigade. When the 9th Company, north of the road, saw the Fusilier Battalion of the 3d Guard Regiment some distance on its right execute the second one-eighth turn against St. Privat it brought its skirmish line into the same front, reinforced it by an additional platoon, and commenced to advance by rushes in the direction of the southern part of the St. Privat—Roncourt road. On direct orders from the brigade commander, whose "Forward, Forward!" was continually heard behind the company, the left platoon deployed as skirmishers. Farther left the 12th Company, which still had one platoon in close order, gradually gained the new front. It received fire from Roncourt both directly from the front and from the half left, and thus was induced itself to take up the fire when still 600 meters from the enemy. At this distance there could be no possible effect and in addition a part of the paper cartridges were soaking wet; but the fire gave the men some employment, and drew their attention away from the enormous destruction in their ranks. In the turn a gap had likewise occurred between the 9th and 12th Companies, increasing during the subsequent rushes as the 12th Company was shoved to the left by the half left enfilading fire. The closed up half-battalion had in the meantime advanced to behind the 9th Company, reinforced it with two platoons, and carried the attack to within 300 meters of the hostile line, its skirmishers joining the right and left flank of the 9th Company.

About this time the French commenced to evacuate the advanced position on the edge of the terrace of St. Privat. Farther north, on the other side of the large basin, other parts also fell back, so that the fire, which up to then had been almost unbearable, commenced to decrease. The flanking fire had caused great losses to the 12th Company and had compelled it to insert its third platoon, but other forces now arrived, supporting it and relieving the battalions fighting farther south from the danger which threatened from Roncourt.

The more the brigade had obliqued to the left north of the road, the more annoying had the enfilading fire from Roncourt become to the rear lines. It was consequently but natural that a part of the battalions in rear should seek and find employment in that direction, especially as they had drawn more to the north than had the battalions of the first line turning against St. Privat. By request of the brigade commander, the regimental commander of the 1st Guard Regiment now ordered the 2d and 1st Battalions, which had crowded together with parts of the sister regiment within the northern meadow strip and there suffered material losses, to proceed in the direction of Roncourt—undoubtedly with the underlying thought of thus enveloping St. Privat. This order, which caused the 1st Guard Regiment to be divided into two parts—between which later on the 4th Guard Regiment inserted itself—was not fully executed, single companies of the 1st as well as of the 2d Battalion being thrown into the attack direction of the Fusilier Battalion.

The 2d Battalion had followed the Fusilier Battalion across the road in two half-battalions alongside of each other, on the right the 5th and 6th, on the left the 7th and 8th Companies. The 5th and 6th Companies were the first to disengage from the crowding in the northern meadow strip and, by direction of General von Kessel, deployed in part against Roncourt, from where fire came. The two and a half deployed platoons, advancing by rushes, crossed the large basin and, under leadership of Lieutenant von Brause, took up the fight with the French skirmishers who occupied the strip of country north of the large basin in front of Roncourt facing partly northwest and partly southwest. On the right they were supported by the other platoons of the two companies which, partly deployed, partly closed up, had halted at the south edge of the large basin, Lieutenant von Arnim in command. The resistance of the French north of the large basin decreased very soon. Lieutenant von Arnim therefore took position with his group left of the 12th Company, which then was on his right and had made front against the Roncourt—St. Privat road, and ordered fire opened against the French north of St. Privat. When the 12th on his right advanced by rushes he kept his group back and attempted to assemble it in accordance with directions from General von Kessel who desired to have in the general deployment at least one detachment in close order.

Of the other half-battalion, the 7th Company at first followed the group under Lieutenant von Arnim; later, enormous losses made it

shift farther to the right and closer to the Fusilier Battalion. The 8th Company was led farther left behind the group under Lieutenant von Brause, crossed the large basin entirely deployed as skirmishers, and, about 150 to 200 meters left of the Brause group, joined the front of that group against Roncourt. It kept up a very hot and costly fire fight against the hostile skirmishers in front of Roncourt and after some time received support from the third line of the brigade.

The two first battalions in the third line during the turns and obliques of the brigade around Ste. Marie had to take up the run to keep their proper place and to lessen the losses caused by the hostile artillery fire to which they were especially subjected. During the left oblique north of the road the 1st Battalion, 3d Guard Regiment gradually arrived behind the 1st Battalion of the sister regiment. This battalion had become to some extent disorganized, having, when crossing the road, allowed its platoons to run across the embankment one after the other at considerable distance in order to avoid greater losses. Hurrying after the 2d Battalion marching in its front, it caught up with it in the northern meadow strip and received orders from the regimental commander "to take the extreme left wing of the battle front with the view of enveloping St. Privat."¹ The different units of the tangled up mass disengaged themselves severally from it like so many rays from a star. The right half-battalion, consisting of the 1st and 2d Companies, was personally sent by General von Kessel to follow up to and serve as a support the Fusilier Battalion just then charging on the northwest corner of St. Privat. To execute this task the battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel von Oppell, had at his disposal only the 4th and 3d Companies which advanced in the direction of Roncourt in two half platoon columns followed by the 1st Guard Pioneer Company. In their front was the 8th Company of the regiment, moving in the same direction. When that company turned to the right against the enemy, on the other side of the great basin, the the leading two half platoons of the 4th and 3d Companies entered the thus cleared space and advanced by rushes, the still closed up parts following and overlapping them on the left. North of the great basin the Brause group of the 2d Battalion—the 8th, the 3d, and the 4th Companies of the 1st Guard Regiment—formed a line with a detached left wing which advanced, between the great basin and the crossroad connecting the Ste. Marie—Montois and the St. Privat—Roncourt roads, against the latter road and against Roncourt.

The 1st Battalion, 3d Foot Guard Regiment, had fallen into some disorder when crossing the road, then obliques sharply to the left and thus joined the confused masses of both regiments behind the northern meadow strip. As it appeared impossible to gain room in an easterly direction against St. Privat the battalion, after order had been restored and half-battalions again formed, followed those parts of the brigade which were moving on Roncourt, and, as extreme echelon, took its

¹Royal Archives.

place behind the left wing of the brigade just crossing the large basin and followed to the northern edge of the basin where a halt was made.

Of the Guard Regiment battalions which had been started toward Roncourt the 1st and 2d Companies had followed the Fusilier Battalion by orders of the brigade commander and the 7th Company had followed on its own initiative. The first mentioned two companies were first inserted in the line in close order, then deployed as skirmishers into the gap made in the Fusilier Battalion between the 9th and 12th Companies. When the enfilading fire coming from Roncourt decreased they fought their way, intermixed with parts of the 12th Company and under enormous losses, against the northwest corner of St. Privat until alongside the 9th Company on the right. The 7th Company, when turning from the northern meadow strip eastward, came under a hot sweeping fire and lost more than half its numbers. Formed in a loose line, running, throwing itself down and firing without having a special target to fire on, it gradually took direction on the gap between the two Fusilier battalions just where the 2d Battalion, 3d Guard Regiment, had just then inserted itself, and, thrusting itself behind the firing line with the remnants of this battalion's 5th and 8th Companies, became entirely dissolved. The only officer still unscathed was wounded just as he was attempting to reestablish some sort of order. The larger part of the 7th Company later on joined the 2d Battalion, 3d Guard Regiment; the rest found a refuge with the other companies.

During these events that group of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade which was deployed against the northwest corner of St. Privat had forced the enemy out of his advanced position at the edge of the terrace of St. Privat.

THE FRENCH EVACUATE THE ADVANCED POSITIONS WEST OF ST. PRIVAT

At the moment when the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade, crossing the road, took a northeasterly direction, the two battalions of the French which had been advanced against the ravine of Homecourt fell back on the second line, as, in addition to having suffered much under the fire of the Saxon artillery, they feared being cut off from their main position by a new enemy. The gaps in the second line were closed by these battalions as well as by reinforcements coming from the third line, thus forming a connected infantry front extending from the Roncourt—Montois la Montagne road to beyond the St. Privat—Ste. Marie road. The extreme right wing was formed by the first battalions of the 9th and 75th Line Regiments, which surrounded Roncourt on a half circle in the northwest; only one company had remained at the north edge of the village proper. Toward the left, on the Roncourt—St. Privat road and a little in rear, connection was made with the 2d Battalion, 10th Line Regiment, which had arrived there from the third line, retreating step by step. Farther south the 2d and 3d Battalions of the 75th and a half battalion of the 10th Line

Regiment of the third line occupied the strip of country from the crossroad between the Roncourt—St. Privat and Montois la Montagne—Ste. Marie roads as far as the large basin; the front was toward the woods of Auboué from where an attack by the Saxons was expected. At a right angle to the front, at the north of and in this large basin, was the 1st Battalion, 91st Line Regiment which had retreated out of the first line there and which swept not only the large basin but also the entire field to the road with enfilading fire. South of the large basin, to the left of the 2d and 3d Battalions, 91st Line Regiment, one half of the 3d and 1st Battalions, 10th Line Regiment, had taken position, coming from the third line.

The 3d Battalion, 93d Line Regiment, which stood on both sides of the road, had found reinforcement on its right wing through two companies of the 1st Battalion, which had retreated in front of the Regiment Franz from the country south of the road.

This infantry front was south of the large basin about 500 to 600 meters in front of St. Privat and of the road leading to Roncourt; north of the large basin it bent back at an obtuse angle on Roncourt. The fire of the battalions at and south of the large basin at first swept the ranks of the advancing 1st Guard Infantry Brigade. But there was no single leadership in the battle, nowhere any fixed intention of holding the position at all costs. There had been no such intention in advancing the troops out of the third line, but rather the wish to facilitate the withdrawal of the battalions retreating from the first line in face of the new enemy approaching from Ste. Marie aux Chênes.

The heavy fire which the French battalions of the second line poured on the dense mass of the attacker, which fire was increased by the troops farther in rear, so far as they had a chance to fire over the head of the line in front, soon ate up the short supply of ammunition and thus caused a premature cessation of resistance. The fact that the hostile mass kept advancing in spite of the enormous losses, that it parted, that it sent ahead skirmishers and uninterruptedly advanced, even though only with fragments, against the French position and gained terrain did much to cause this early cessation of resistance. The fire of the enemy increased their effect; when the opponent had approached the French skirmishers to within 200 to 250 meters all thoughts of resistance were abandoned. The number of men rising from the position and retreating became larger and larger; nobody awaited the advent of the attacker in the position. The first to retreat were those parts of the 93d Line Regiment deployed on both sides of the road, thereby opening to the Regiment Franz a way south of the main highway for its further advance. The 91st Line Regiment, whose 1st Battalion had especially annoyed the Prussians with its enfilading fire from the north edge of the large basin, was next to give way. It is quite comprehensible that this very battalion, which had just retreated across the open under the fire of the Saxon artillery, was least able to resist the general movement to the rear. Finally the parts of the 10th Line Regiment deployed south of the large basin also

retreated and thus, on this part of the battlefield, the road was clear for the Prussians.

North of the large basin the gradual advance of the Saxons from the woods of Auboué and through Montois la Montagne had forced the 75th Line Regiment deployed there to retreat, together with the parts of the 9th and 10th Line Regiments which had joined it. To this cause for the retreat should be added the effect of the Saxon artillery, the uncovering of the left flank directed against the southwest when the troops south of the large basin left, and the advance of parts of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade across the large basin. The retreat of the infantry also decided the course of the last four batteries of the 6th Corps which had again opened fire behind the ridge between Roncourt and St. Privat when the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade offered them a specially welcome target. As soon as the infantry cleared the road to them they gradually joined the receiving position of the artillery of the 6th Corps at the quarries of Amanweiler. Their losses were unimportant, but ammunition was scarce.

The retreat of the troops from the advanced lines, north as well as south of the road—which retreat was made by the men themselves without orders from higher authority, roused, in conjunction with the danger of envelopment threatening from Montois la Montagne, the conviction in the mind of the commander of the 6th Corps, Marshal Canrobert, that retreat on Metz could not be prevented and that the only thing left to do now was to secure the route of retreat through Marengo and Saulny by holding the village of St. Privat. At 6.30 p.m. he sent information to the 4th Corps nearby in the south that he would soon be compelled to evacuate St. Privat and fall back by way of Saulny. At the same time he sent a request for help to the Guard Corps.¹ The commander of the 1st Division, General Tixier, received orders to reinforce the garrison of the village with the 4th and 100th Line Regiments now in reserve east of St. Privat and to form a defensive flank east of the village toward Roncourt. The mass of the retreating infantry of all the divisions of the 6th Corps pressed into St. Privat, into the bottom east of the village, and along the road leading to Marengo, the smaller number of them with the intention of supporting the garrison of the village in the coming attack, the majority endeavoring merely to avoid further danger. A stream of fugitives and wounded, mixed with vehicles of all descriptions, pressed along the road through Saulny to Metz. The dissolution of units and of discipline had reached a remarkable degree.

At length north of St. Privat there were only two battalions of the 9th Line Regiment and the three regiments of the cavalry division du Barail. Of the first mentioned the 1st Battalion retreated from Roncourt to the forest of Jaumont; the 2d Battalion, which had stood behind the ridge south of Roncourt, advanced a short distance and faced toward the northwest. Shortly after 6.50 p.m. the Cavalry Division

¹This request did not reach the Guard Corps.

du Barail received orders from Marshal Canrobert to "attempt" a charge in order to gain time for the 6th Corps against the advancing Germans and to facilitate its retreat, especially the falling back of the right wing to the route of retreat. General du Barail transmitted these orders to the Brigade Bruchard. He intended himself to lead behind that charge the still remaining 2d Regiment Chasseurs d'Afrique; but it did not get very far and later on retreated along the west edge of the forest of Jaumont southeast of Roncourt. The two regiments of the Brigade Bruchard starting from the bottom east of the ridge between Roncourt and St. Privat reached the ridge about halfway between the villages and halted there while two squadrons of the leading 3d Chasseur Regiment deployed as skirmishers and rode at a gallop along the large basin against the German skirmish lines. This happened at the time when the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade had already entered the position evacuated by the French and had come to a momentary halt.

THE 1ST GUARD INFANTRY BRIGADE ENTERS THE ABANDONED
FRENCH POSITION AND MOMENTARILY HALTS. THE
CHARGE OF THE FRENCH CAVALRY IS DEFEATED

When the Fusiliers of the 3d Guard Regiment, on the right wing of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade, had rushed to within 250 meters of the advanced French infantry position, they could clearly see the trenches arranged with knapsacks and ammunition boxes and behind them the caps and heads of the French. The Fusiliers kept up an effective fire for about ten minutes when they received support on their left wing from the remnant of the 2d Battalion. This in itself immaterial reinforcement of the German needle gun fire caused disquietness in the French line and numerous French skirmishers could be seen leaving it. The officers decided on the final charge. The remainder of the force was gathered together. With loud hurrahs the Fusiliers charged. On the left the Grenadiers of the 2d Battalion joined the charge after a short rapid fire. In utter rout the remnant of the French still in the position fled to the village. A first important success had been attained, but the sharp hostile fire now coming from the village soon stopped the victorious onrush of this German line. It had to hug the ground 600 to 700 meters from the village—that is outside of needle gun range—and was able only to exchange shots with a few advanced skirmishers behind the field walls in the foreground.

Reinforcements came from the rear, companies of the 2d Battalion of the 3d and of the 7th Company of the 1st Guard Regiment; but they were insufficient to carry the depleted skirmish line forward.

Farther north the Fusilier Battalion of the 1st Guard Regiment received renewed impetus from the charge from the lines of the 1st and 2d Companies of the same regiment, which came up with drums beating, and this impetus was strengthened by the perception that the enemy's line was gradually thinning. The hostile position was reached; some sort of protection was offered there by the knapsacks

and the hardtack and cartridge boxes filled with earth; but the fire from the northern part of the village as well as from the field walls in the foreground came undiminished; here also a further advance was not to be thought of for the present.

Thus the remnants of three and a half battalions, intermixed with parts of other companies, had fought their way south of the large basin to within 600 or 700 meters of the St. Privat—Roncourt road and the churchyard which formed the northwest corner of the village. There were no reserves save that, behind the left wing, parts of the 5th and 6th Companies, 1st Guard Regiment, under Lieutenant von Arnim, formed a sort of rear echelon at the south edge of the large basin. After the advance of the Fusilier Battalion, 1st Guard Regiment had masked their fire on St. Privat they fired on targets the other side of the large basin. There the remainder of the 5th and 6th Companies, under Lieutenant von Brause, had pursued the enemy, who had early retreated, to the northern edge of the large basin until they were forced to halt 600 meters from the St. Privat—Roncourt road. On this road, which in part runs through cuts, the enemy still made a stand and also in the country southwest of Roncourt, after having evacuated the terrain between the large basin and the connecting road north of it, falling back toward the east. The 8th Company, 1st Guard Regiment, had just taken its place alongside of the group Brause in the line now facing east when the regimental commander, Colonel von Roeder, galloped to the front of the line and with the words "Hurry! Forward, Grenadiers!" carried the line onward in a new rush. This charge brought the line 200 meters closer to the enemy, but here it received such a hot fire from St. Privat that the Grenadiers had to confine themselves to holding the ground they had obtained. The enemy, driven from the St. Privat—Roncourt road, disappeared behind the ridge between the two villages. Thereupon the 3d and 4th Companies, 1st Guard Regiment, by orders of the regimental commander, placed themselves with short distance between on a line with the left wing of the 2d Battalion.

At this moment—it was about 6.45 p.m.—the charge of the two Chasseur regiments of the Cavalry Division du Barail took place. On the ridge between St. Privat and Roncourt the French cavalry, visible from afar, appeared; one platoon rode in front and took direction on the separated parts of the 2d Battalion, 1st Guard Regiment, at the large basin. That cavalry's appearance had a strong effect; a great restlessness showed along the entire fighting line of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade, and even beyond it to the Regiment Franz south of the road. The disrupted and depleted regiments—at full strength and assembled only some two hours before—were overcome by a sense of their weakness. There was no cavalry present for a counter charge. The divisional cavalry of the 2d Guard Infantry Division, the 2d Guard Uhlan Regiment, had started, it is true, from the ravine of Auboué,¹

¹After the charge had been defeated by the infantry, the regiment remained in a position of readiness northeast of Ste. Marie aux Chênes.

going around the west of Ste. Marie aux Chênes; but naturally it would arrive too late if the French cavalry rode energetically. This it did not do. But before the German infantry could perceive that it was only a question of defeating merely a detachment of cavalry formed of two squadrons, the disquietness had already produced its effects. In the Regiment Franz thick groups formed themselves according to drill ground practice, unfortunately offering excellent targets to the French infantry but of no avail against the distant French cavalry. More firmness was shown by the skirmishers of the 2d Guard Regiment which just then entered the gap between the Regiment Franz and the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade. In the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade the commanding general, General von Kessel, considered the situation very dangerous; the conduct of the troops here in the several organizations was very diverse. On the right wing of the brigade one of the last officers of the Fusilier Battalion, 3d Guard Regiment led the 150 remaining men back some few hundred meters, as the continuous losses were unbearable and there was no hope of holding off the cavalry, should it ride on in mass. Though the men fell back at a walk, it was very difficult to get them to make front again at the spot where the leader intended, until the division commander, General von Pape, who had again ridden up from Ste. Marie, brought the men into order with a few words. Subsequently he saw to it that the remainder of the Fusilier Battalion, which in the meantime had lost an additional 30 men, was assembled on the road behind the 2d Guard Regiment. They did not take part in the assault on St. Privat. Farther north a retrograde movement also took place with the 2d Battalion, 3d Guard Regiment, the men being without leaders. Here the forceful interference of General von Pape and his orderly officer, Lieutenant von Esbeck, called von Platen, of the Guard Hussar Regiment, was required to cause the men to again make front.¹ For the rest the skirmishers remained lying south of the large basin, as General von Kessel, hastening from group to group, endeavored to caution the men to lie still. A hot fire was poured on the hostile cavalry. In the 2d Battalion, 1st Guard Regiment, which was immediately threatened by the charge, the cry was taken up in Lieutenant von Brauses's group north of the large basin: "Cavalry is coming; form squares." The men rose and formed into dense groups but, after a few sharp words from their officer, soon lay down again deployed as skirmishers and ceased firing. "Every one will wait my command to fire; will then fire carefully, aiming at the horses' breasts," he directed calmly. On his right and left an enormous rapid fire had already commenced. He allowed the leading line of the charging cavalry to come within 250 meters, then gave the command for a volley, followed by rapid fire. The troopers became confused, faced about, and disappeared, as did also the echelons in their rear, behind the hill between Roncourt and St. Privat.

¹Posthumous papers of General von Pape.

Thus the weakly undertaken charge of the Cavalry Brigade Bruchard came to a quick and inglorious conclusion though the losses were small.¹ Nevertheless General Bruchard claims the distinction of having brought the German line to a standstill, confounding the effect of his appearance with the effect of the fire of the French infantry. As a matter of fact the charge was hopeless, not so much against the fragments of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade as against the 4th Guard Regiment, following up as reserve, against the Saxon artillery north of Ste. Marie aux Chênes and the Saxon columns appearing north of Roncourt. The two Chasseur regiments were led back to the terrain east of St. Privat.

THE 1ST GUARD INFANTRY BRIGADE ABOUT THE END OF
THE SEVENTH AFTERNOON HOUR

After the defeat of the hostile cavalry charge the group under Lieutenant von Brause and the 8th Company on its immediate left remained on the hill with the three trees; behind them, at the north edge of the large basin, was the 1st Battalion, 3d Guard Regiment, while farther north the 3d and 4th Companies, 1st Guard Regiment, had to overcome a serious opposition in their advance on Roncourt.

In front of the southwest corner of Roncourt, behind the stone field walls and other obstructions in the terrain, were hidden hostile skirmish groups which had not yet generally joined the retreat of the French infantry. The 3d and 4th Companies, 1st Guard Regiment, were compelled by the fire of this opponent to deploy, except two platoons which followed in echelon to the left, and advanced by rushes against the enemy, suffering considerable loss in doing so; the left wing in part enveloped this enemy. The French did not await the final rush but fled in part to Roncourt and in part to behind the ridge. Only one officer and two men remained to continue the fire, and allowed themselves to be shot at close range. The skirmishers of the two companies halted at the field walls and behind them, the two closed up platoons and the 1st Guard Pioneer Company at the connecting road north of the large basin. This was about the end of the seventh afternoon hour.

About this time the front extension of the leading deployed parts of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade—four battalions after the Fusilier Battalion of the 3d Guard Regiment had fallen out—was about 1100 meters; as the right wing and the center were much depleted, the left wing far dispersed after an interrupted advance of more than three kilometers, the battle line showed only thin skirmish lines or weak skirmish groups. North of the large basin there was still some depth formation, south of it only a group held in rear, that under Lieutenant von Arnim. Reinforcements were coming up: the 2d Guard Regiment which had about gotten on a line with the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade when the cavalry charge was defeated; and the 4th Guard Regiment

¹The leading regiment, the 8d Chasseurs, lost 4 officers, 28 men; the 2d Chasseurs 3 men.

which at that time had ascended the east bank of the ravine at Home-court to advance along the large basin on St. Privat,

THE 2D GUARD REGIMENT INSERTS ITSELF ON THE RIGHT OF
THE 1ST GUARD INFANTRY BRIGADE

The 2d Guard Regiment had stood behind the west front of Ste. Marie aux Chênes in two lines: in the first line, the 1st and the Fusilier Battalion; in the second, the 2d Battalion behind the 1st Battalion. At 5.50 p.m., that is, five minutes later than the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade, it started with orders to follow the latter echeloned to the left rear.¹ The battalions faced to the right about and, after having passed the southwest corner of the village, reassumed their original front by facing to the left. The subsequent march in the direction of St. Privat along the south edge of Ste. Marie was executed in three lines, as the Fusilier Battalion, overlapping on the right, took position behind the 2d Battalion. In the meantime the regiment had received new orders: to enter the battle on the right of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade. When the regiment appeared south of Ste. Marie aux Chênes the opponent directed his fire on this new target and several shells struck between the battalions.² The fire, especially that of the infantry, increased when the Ste. Marie—St. Ail road was crossed; at the same time the situation of the Guard infantry, hitherto advanced, was perceived. In front was the entire 4th Guard Infantry Brigade pressing with its left wing toward the road; farther to the left the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade, drawing sharply to the left, was seen reaching out on an arc against St. Privat.

Colonel Count von Kanitz had directed that in the advance the 2d Battalion should place itself on the right of the 1st, the Fusilier Battalion to follow, echeloned to the right. The battalions were to deploy companies in good time and take connection and direction with the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade. The leading 1st Battalion formed one line south of the road; one platoon of each company deployed as skirmishers. About 400 meters east of Ste. Marie the road was crossed at the run, making a left oblique, the 4th Company in the lead, the other companies following with different intervals. On the other side of the road the left oblique was continued at quick time until the left wing of the 4th Company had uncovered the right wing of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade. Thereupon the front was turned toward the enemy and the general direction taken on the northwest corner of St. Privat. All these movements were made under heavy losses. From time to time all halted to get their breath, the men then kneeling down, officers standing. The battalion had already lost most of its officers before it entered the battle line proper. The tactical formation had been lost;

¹The commander of the 2d Guard Infantry Brigade, General von Medem, accompanied the regiment.

²At this time on the right of the 2d Guard Regiment appeared the 2d Guard Uhlán Regiment which had orders to follow the advancing infantry of the 2d Guard Infantry Division. The shell fire compelled the regiment to fall back on the ravine of Auboué. It subsequently started again, to turn against the French cavalry.

the skirmishers became mixed with the supporting troops; stragglers from the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade and of the Regiment Franz pressed into their lines. The battalion became a skirmish line of unequal density; the forward movement at length stopped nearly completely. Then parts of the 2d Battalion came up from the rear and carried the skirmishers ahead with them.

This latter battalion which had followed the 1st Battalion, overlapping it on the right, had early formed two half-battalions. The left, consisting of the 7th and 6th Companies under Captain von Collas, followed the 1st Battalion with about 80 meters distance across the road and took direction on the church spire of St. Privat. Its way led across numerous dead and wounded of the Franz Regiment. The half battalion had broken off into half platoon column and remained in close order until its commander, turning the front from the left oblique into the direction of St. Privat, gave the command, about 400 meters north of the road:—"As skirmishers! To the attack! Rifles right! Drummers beat!" Just then he fell mortally wounded, the horse of the other company commander fell, and the half battalion saw no leader in its front. The command had not been heard by all; it was not at once executed; the drummers commenced beating only when called on by the troops. Slowly, still obliquing to the left, gradually deploying into thick skirmish groups in which the hostile fire caused heavy losses, the half battalion came on the line of the 1st Battalion, taking its place on the right. It now went on with that battalion until, 700 meters west of St. Privat, the right wing of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade, the 2d Battalion, 3d Guard Regiment, was reached.¹ Although the hostile cavalry had then appeared on the heights north of St. Privat, this battalion rose up to join the forward movement. But very soon everything came to a halt again, partly on account of the fire effect from St. Privat, and partly because the rifles were turned against the cavalry. The position which the French had evacuated opposite the churchyard of St. Privat had been reached, and the knapsacks, cartridge and hardtack boxes filled with earth found there gave some sort of protection. Finally the six dwindled companies of the 2d Guard Regiment could use their rifles; an enormous rapid fire was opened along the entire line directed in part enfiladingly on the hostile troopers.

The two other companies of the 2d Battalion, the 8th and 5th, had deployed south of the road. About 50 meters east of the half-battalion under Captain von Collas the 5th Company crossed the road embankment, immediately deployed as skirmishers and, mostly at the run, took direction on the right wing of the half-battalion Collas. Under a hot fire, which disabled nearly all officers and more than half the men, the company gradually gained the open space between the right wing of the half-battalion Collas and the road and threw itself down for the fire fight a little in front of that half-battalion.

¹The Fusilier Battalion was just then drawn back.

The 5th Company arrived on the road a little later than did the 8th Company and attempted, as its way northward was blocked by the 8th Company, to proceed along the road itself. Under a perfect rain of pieces of shells striking its ranks the company came to a stand about 250 meters behind the 8th Company and sought protection in the ditches and behind the piles of stones along the road. Its losses were comparatively small. Here it came into connection with the remnants of the Regiment Franz clinging to the road. A panic started by the arrival of fleeing men was quickly strangled in its arising by Lieutenant von Zitzewitz.

There still was a gap of some 150 to 200 meters between the road and the 8th Company. This gap was filled by the Fusilier Battalion which had followed the leading battalions 200 meters to the right rear south of the road and which had deployed in one line after crossing the Ste. Marie—St. Ail road in column of companies. When the front had been cleared by the left oblique of the leading battalions, the 11th, 10th and 12th Companies crossed the road, the 9th Company remaining on the south of it; all companies marched into line and proceeded to near the right wing of the 2d Battalion, where orders to halt reached them from the regimental commander. The losses were especially heavy in the 11th and 10th Companies, which prolonged the line of the 2d Battalion on the right; they were less with the 12th and 9th Companies. The 12th Company halted nearest the road without fully filling the still existing gap between the troops north of the road and the road itself. In the open space on its right the 5th Company, which had been held in rear, then entered, while the 9th Company, remaining on and at the road, advanced a short distance beyond the position of the 5th Company and reinforced the front of the 2d Grenadier Regiment Kaiser Franz facing against St. Privat.

The entrance of the Fusilier Battalion into the fighting line cost less sacrifice on the whole than that of the 1st and 2d Battalions. When it appeared north of the road the advanced position of the front of St. Privat had already been partly evacuated, hill 328 immediately southwest of the village was in the hands of the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade, and the French artillery was in retreat.

The closing of the gap between the Guard brigades meant a material reinforcement of the German fighting power opposite St. Privat. As the defenders were compelled to direct their fire now in part on the new attacker the relief was felt materially by the remnants of the troops fighting under the most difficult situation in front of the village.

THE 4TH FOOT REGIMENT OF THE GUARD IS SENT TO FOLLOW UP THE LEFT WING OF THE 1ST GUARD INFANTRY BRIGADE

As the commander of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade, General von Kessel, realized from the effect of the hostile massed fire that an uninterrupted advance of his brigade was bound to lead to annihilation,

he sent orders to both of his regiments to halt. These orders were superfluous and, in any case, reached only the 2d and the Fusilier Battalion of the 1st Guard Regiment. General exhaustion and the hostile fire had compelled the troops to lie down as soon as the abandoned hostile position was reached. At the same time as the orders were sent General von Kessel sent his last remaining aid, Second Lieutenant Count von Pfeil¹, and shortly thereafter also the adjutant of the 1st Guard Regiment, 1st Lieutenant von Falckenhause, to corps headquarters and to the division commander with a request for support and with the report that he stood in front of St. Privat and had ordered his brigade to halt, for the reason that, after the losses suffered, he was too weak to undertake the assault without support². Second Lieutenant Count von Pfeil encountered the commanding general and his staff on the west side of Ste. Marie aux Chênes, reported to him, and when asked about the losses suffered stated that probably one half of the brigade was killed or wounded. Prince August of Württemberg approved the measures taken by General von Kessel. The aid was dismissed with the assurance that the 4th Foot Regiment of the Guard would advance on the left of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade³. Thereupon corps headquarters rode into the village to take the necessary measures.

The division commander, General von Pape, had already arrived in that village to make disposition of the 4th Guard Regiment⁴. At the eastern exit of Ste. Marie aux Chênes he met the regimental commander, Colonel von Neumann, who had just then received orders from his brigade commander, General von Medem, "to follow up as second line the 2d Guard Regiment advancing to the attack south of the road on St. Privat."⁵ In compliance with these orders the 4th Foot Regiment of the Guard had fallen in and was about to leave the village. But now—it was 6.30 in the afternoon—it received orders from General von Pape to advance to the support of the left wing of the Brigade Kessel. At that moment the commanding general arrived and ordered Colonel von Neumann to lead his regiment through the northern exit of Ste. Marie aux Chênes so as to avoid losses. The colonel immediately rode back into the village to carry out these orders; but General von Pape, fearing that the advance of the 4th Foot Regiment of the Guard would be materially delayed because of the interference of the commanding general, directed the 1st Battalion in the lead to use the eastern exit, specially enjoining the battalion commander to reinforce the left wing of the columns attacking St. Privat⁶. In the meantime General von Kessel's aid, Second Lieu-

¹The brigade adjutant, all other aids and the orderlies of brigade headquarters were disabled.

²Recollections of General von Kessel and statement of the (then) brigade adjutant, Lieutenant von Mitzlaff.

³Statement of (then) Lieutenant Count von Pfeil.

⁴Page 306, *ante*.

⁵War Archives.

⁶War Archives.

tenant Count von Pfeil, had reported to General von Pape and delivered the brigade commander's request for support. He was told that the 1st Battalion of the 4th Foot Regiment of the Guard was already enroute and that the other battalions would follow very soon. Then General von Pape proceeded to the Guard Fusilier Regiment at the eastern exit of Ste. Marie aux Chênes and informed the regimental commander, Major Feldmann, that the Guard Jäger Battalion would defend the village in case of a reverse and that the Guard Fusilier Regiment should hold itself in readiness to interfere in the battle¹. He then returned to the fighting line reaching it at the moment when the hostile cavalry made ready to charge².

When Colonel von Neumann rode out of the northern exit of Ste. Marie aux Chênes after having made the necessary dispositions, he encountered the adjutant of the 1st Foot Regiment of the Guard, First Lieutenant von Falckenhausen, who oriented him as to the situation and urged him to advance on St. Privat to support that portion of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade which had advanced against that village³. In the meantime the 1st Battalion had worked its way through the gardens in the eastern portion of the village and taken the direction to the north. At the same time the Fusilier Battalion, facing left about by sections, crossed that part of the village nearest Auboué, where it had stood, formed half-battalions, and marched along the road to Montois la Montagne. It was followed by the 2d Battalion from the center of the village and for that purpose the leading—in rear of the 1st Battalion—5th and 6th Companies faced about on the village street and together with the 7th and 8th Companies left the northeast front of the village. After the 1st Battalion had left the edge of the village it had to take up the short step by orders of Colonel von Neumann so that the Fusilier Battalion could take its place on the left, while the 2d Battalion took its place in second line. The battalions advanced northward within the Homecourt ravine until they reached the western end of the large basin. The battalions had express orders to fully utilize this basin for cover in the further advance. First, a turn had to be made towards St. Privat. In this turn the 1st Battalion deployed on the 1st Company which came on the right wing; the other companies turned consecutively in serial number so that the 4th Company got exactly into the depression in the large basin, while the 1st was about 600 meters from Ste. Marie aux Chênes. The 2d Battalion, also turning to the right, followed the 4th Company at a distance of 350 meters, formed into two half-battalions. The Fusilier Battalion kept along the ravine somewhat farther northward so as to keep its place on the left of the 1st Battalion after execution of the turn; however,

¹Posthumous papers of General von Pape.

²Page 316, *ante*.

³Statements of the (then) Lieutenant von Falckenhausen. Subsequently he met General von Pape on the road behind the right wing of the 2d Foot Regiment of the Guard and received from him, on his request for support of the Brigade Kessel, the answer:—"The Saxons are coming up now."

when the turn was made, with the four companies alongside of each other, it found itself in the third line to the left rear of the 2d Battalion. The interval became still larger because the Fusilier Battalion, endeavoring to secure the left flank of the regiment against still unknown conditions in the north, adhered to its easterly direction instead of turning directly against St. Privat.

When the regiment ascended the east slope of the Homecourt ravine the hostile artillery fire had about died out and the infantry line, which had advanced north and south of the large basin was already giving way. Only a few shells greeted the regiment on its appearance on the battlefield. At the start the hostile infantry had but slight effect as it was directed mainly against the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade. In spite of this the regiment, endeavoring to show but small targets to the enemy, early deployed single platoons, even entire companies as skirmishers and because of this as well as its apt utilization of the terrain its losses were materially smaller than those of the troops which had preceded it. In this it was favored of course by the fact that its advance was directed obliquely against the northwest corner of St. Privat, thus encountering no broad hostile fire front. At the start the regiment could see nothing definite either of the enemy or of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade, for the dust clouds and powder smoke enveloped the entire surroundings. Only silhouettes could be distinguished within the regiment itself. Only after a further advance were some dark lines of skirmishers seen lying in front of the center of St. Privat. Some wounded men of the 1st Foot Regiment of the Guard coming back from the north of the large basin indicated that the Brigade Kessel extended to there. Occasionally, when the screen of powder smoke momentarily opened, some single men or small bodies of men became visible immediately in front of the village and on the St. Privat—Roncourt road. South of the road leading to Ste. Marie aux Chênes larger masses were seen going back—these were crowds of wounded streaming back to Ste. Marie aux Chênes.

The 1st Battalion took for its march objective the church steeple of St. Privat as soon as it appeared through the dense clouds of smoke enveloping the battlefield, in the hope of thus most quickly gaining connection with the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade. With drill ground precision—skirmishers in front, followed by the supports in half-platoons—the regiment, paying no heed to the fact that on its right its colonel sank seriously wounded from his horse, advanced up to and even beyond the line of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade, taking but a very few breathing spells. Within the large basin the 4th Company came to a stand on the left front of the group under First Lieutenant von Arnim of the 2d Battalion, 1st Foot Regiment of the Guard¹; the other three companies, absorbing the Fusilier Battalion of that regiment, halted to the right front of the group Arnim and threw themselves on the ground. The fire was then directed against the north-

¹Page 315, *ante*.

west corner of St. Privat; but as the nearest hostile targets were still more than 500 meters distant the advance by rushes was continued.

The 2d Battalion, following behind the 4th Company, drew the left half-battalion, consisting of the 8th and 7th Companies, up to the other half-battalion in the depression of the large basin as soon as the hostile fire made itself effectively felt; the right half-battalion thus received a pressure to the right and gradually arrived at the southern edge. From here the battalion commander had his first view of the battlefield. North of St. Privat hostile artillery appeared to be still in action; infantry was seen lying in several lines one behind the other in skirmish trenches on the slopes north and west of the village corner. Hostile fire came from there as apparently also from Roncourt. The left wing of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade was perceived in battle against Roncourt and against the hill between there and St. Privat. The right half-battalion commenced to advance by rushes, the left conforming to this movement in the large basin. The way led across many dead and wounded, among whom were French as well. The impression was gained that the battalion was advancing over a field already victoriously crossed by the troops in front, that the battalion was then very close to the leading German line, only dimly seen through the powder-smoke and dust, and that an immediate contact would be had with the enemy. The battalion had just arisen for what was thought to be the final rush when the regimental adjutant, Lieutenant von Daum, galloped up to the left wing and brought the nearest troops to a halt with the call: "Halt, halt! Don't advance. Wait for the Saxons!"¹ The battalion threw itself down again and when the dust had to some extent dispersed it was seen that the two half-battalions actually had reached the most advanced fighting line, but that this line was still far from the northwest corner of St. Privat. Across the field the broken line of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade could now be seen lying flat on the ground and enveloping the village in a shallow arc. The 2d Battalion had halted in and south of the large basin behind the group under Lieutenant von Arnim of the 2d Battalion, 1st Guard Regiment. This group lay in the gap between the 4th and the three other companies of the 1st Battalion, 4th Guard Regiment.

North of the large basin the Fusilier Battalion had kept the easterly direction and, formed in one line, strove to reach the St. Privat—Roncourt road about half way between the two villages. As infantry fire came from there as well as from Roncourt, the companies deployed skirmishers and commenced to advance by rushes; of the center companies, the 10th and 11th, two platoons of each remained in close order in the second line, to serve as flank protection in case of need against Roncourt. The Fusilier Battalion arrived at the most advanced fighting line north of the large basin considerably later than the two grenadier battalions.

¹Immediately after Lieutenant von Daum fell exhausted from his horse, apparently unwounded. The orders to halt came from the Guard Corps headquarters.

SITUATION OF THE 1ST GUARD INFANTRY DIVISION AT THE
CLOSE OF THE SEVENTH AFTERNOON HOUR

At the close of the seventh afternoon hour the 1st Guard Infantry Division took up a position which reached from the vicinity southwest of Roncourt as far as the road and allowed the troops to pour an effective fire on at least the closest French lines. The advance of the 2d and 4th Guard Regiments had brought the remnants of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade so many fresh forces that it appeared now possible to execute the final attack. General von Kessel, who was on the right wing of the 1st Guard Regiment, felt that a decisive attack from the center of the position against the northwest corner of St. Privat gave the best promise of success and that a charge farther south against the strongly occupied west side of the village would be far less hopeful. Although no continuous artillery fire had yet been directed against the village the defenders seemed somewhat shaken. Some single detachments fell back from their positions, but were again driven forward. In the village, columns were moving. Undoubtedly the intrepid advance of the Guard had made the enemy uncertain and irresolute. General von Kessel could so far see nothing of the expected interference of the Saxons.¹

The division commander, General von Pape, viewed the situation less hopefully. When he returned after having led the 4th Guard Regiment on the road to the right wing of the 2d Guard Regiment, the extended fighting line of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade appeared to him so much broken after the enormous losses that an offensive could not be expected from it. Combined with this the repeated pictures of fleeing, leaderless soldiers and the heavy loss in officers increased his unfavorable view. One of the last higher commanders, Colonel von Roeder of the 1st Guard Regiment, hastened up to him with the information that the attack was not progressing properly but that he still hoped to reach the northwest corner of St. Privat very soon with his 1st Battalion. General von Pape called his attention to the approaching 4th Guard Regiment and requested him not to be overhasty. The colonel returned to the left wing of his regiment and was later on seriously wounded. General von Pape's reference to the 4th Guard Regiment was not made in the hope that this regiment would bring the decision. On the other hand, it seemed to him impossible that the 1st Guard Infantry Division would leave unexecuted the orders it had received to take St. Privat. He therefore decided to draw up the Guard Fusilier Regiment from Ste. Marie and to lead it personally to the assault against the southwest corner of St. Privat while the 4th Guard Regiment assaulted the northwest corner. When he gave his general staff officer, Captain von Holleben, the necessary directions, the latter called his attention to the fact that three regiments were wholly, a fourth partly inserted and that the fifth, led against the same hostile front, might not bring the desired

¹Recollections of General von Kessel.

success. He earnestly counseled against sacrificing an additional regiment; other means ought to be employed.

General von Pape had no doubts at all as to what was meant by other means. He himself had long since deplored the absence of artillery preparation on St. Privat. He now sent his orderly officer, Lieutenant von Esbeck, called von Platen, to the left wing to see if some Saxon batteries might not be induced to fire on the village. This officer was also to ascertain how close the Saxons were and what they were doing. The division adjutant, Major Count von Ysenburg, was directed to ride to the Guard artillery south of the road and to request it to bring a few batteries close enough to St. Privat to fire effectively on the village and set it afire within ten minutes. The general staff officer was sent by the division commander to Ste. Marie aux Chênes to start the Guard Fusilier Regiment without fail and to direct the Guard Jäger Battalion to defend Ste. Marie to the very last and not to evacuate that village under any circumstances without direct orders from the division commander. With his last remaining orderly officer, who had lost his horse, General von Pape remained halted at the road, awaiting the effect of his orders.¹

Headquarters of the Guard Corps, after the departure of the 4th Foot Guard Regiment, had remained at the eastern exit of Ste. Marie aux Chênes. Here the unfavorable aspect of the battlefield was strongest. As far as the eye reached the field was covered with killed and wounded. An endless stream of men seeking the dressing stations came along the road. From all directions men covered with blood arrived, groaning, hardly able to carry themselves along, and striving to get out of the hostile fire zone. The report which General von Kessel sent back concerning the progress of the battle was but slightly reassuring. The longer Prince August of Württemberg viewed the battlefield with all its horrors, the more he gained the conviction that even the 4th Foot Guard Regiment would be unable to bring this horrible battle to a victorious conclusion. Fresher, stronger forces were necessary to overcome the enemy, and these could be brought only by the Saxons whose interference had been expected for the past two hours. How great were the disillusionments which the past few hours had brought the Prince! The enemy, believed by him to be weak and to be easily overcome, was strong and unapproachable in his defensive power; in place of a rapid success a long drawn out battle with enormous losses had ensued, and the non-arrival of the Saxons, whose help he at the start had not believed he would need to gain the victory, was painfully felt by him now. As commander of the army corps the Prince stood far in rear of the most advanced fighting line and the pictures of bravery and self-sacrifice shown by the 1st Guard Infantry Division in the battle could not raise his spirits. He saw only the scenes of human misery behind the front and, under these depressing influences, he sent orders forward that everything should halt until the

¹Posthumous papers of General von Pape.

Saxons effectively interfered. These orders were useless as regards the larger mass of the infantry fighting in front, since it had long ago halted as General von Kessel had reported, and were effective only for the 2d Battalion, 4th Guard Regiment. They came too late in any case, because now, as a matter of fact, the Saxons appeared at Roncourt.

Among the leaders of the Guard Corps only General von Kessel estimated the situation correctly. He was in the midst of his men in the most advanced fighting line and, so to speak, best felt the pulse of the men. These men who with defiant bravery had lived through the worst battle crisis, stubbornly holding the captured position, were still imbued with the desire to get forward and it needed but little encouragement to carry them on.

HEADQUARTERS SECOND ARMY PROCEEDS TO
THE IXTH ARMY CORPS

Prince Frederick Charles watched the advance of the Guard Infantry from the hill west of Habonville. He saw the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade, apparently in dense columns and colors flying, start from St. Ail, advancing with a gradual deployment of strong skirmish lines against the ridge held by the enemy southwest of St. Privat. Viewed from Habonville the growth of the hedge road there joined the west edge of the forests on the left bank of the Mosel farther east, so that it appeared as if these two woods were one. He perceived the Guard infantry come to a halt at this apparent forest edge, rise up again and disappear in it until finally hidden from view. From this he concluded that the infantry was already beyond St. Privat and that at least the southern part of the village had been taken possession of. North of the road the right wing of the 1st Guard Infantry Division was seen advancing on the rising terrain in front of the village. Further observations were prevented by the dense powder smoke which hid the picture, but the impression gained was very satisfactory.¹ The assumption that St. Privat had been taken by the Guard was strengthened by the advance of the guard artillery. It was seen that a gradually ensuing turn to the right took place from the position southeast of St. Ail to the front against the ridge southwest of St. Privat which turn took the left wing of the artillery so far that it also appeared to be on the other side of the village.² The artillery fire of the enemy at St. Privat which had been so voluminous when the advance of the Guards started, ceased again. As far as could be seen the decision on the left wing appeared to have been favorable and that without the interference of the XIIth Army Corps. Not till later was there seen in the vicinity of Roncourt an artillery line, which could belong only to the Saxon corps, and which proved the interference of that corps.

¹ Von der Goltz, *Die Operationen der IIId Armee*, p. 150. (p. 76 ante.)

² Statement of the (then) Lieutenant von der Goltz of the general staff of Second Army Headquarters.

If now St. Privat was in the hands of the Guard Corps, then the road of retreat northwest was blocked to the hostile forces which had been chained down on Metz by the German attack. But the thoughts of Prince Frederick Charles now turned again to the Mosel valley, with its railroad and telegraph running north. It is true that he had sent orders as early as 3.45 p.m. to the XIIth Army Corps to occupy the valley of the Mosel and destroy railroad and telegraph in order to deprive the enemy, who in his opinion were trying to evade the Germans, of the last possibility of escape. It was clear that for this purpose the Crown Prince of Saxony could use only cavalry, as his infantry had to solve other tasks, the difficulties of which it had been impossible to foretell. Now, however, the decision appeared to have been gained, so that the entire Saxon infantry would not be required in the battle and would therefore be available to block the road completely to the enemy. An advance of the infantry into the valley of the Mosel toward Woippy could become a serious menace to the retreat of the hostile forces, which were now battling at Amanweiler and would probably have to take the road from St. Privat through Woippy to Metz for their retreat. It had not escaped the Prince's observation that these hostile forces had attempted an attack north of the railroad and had otherwise taken the offensive whenever an opportunity offered. While all this was being considered, an orderly officer arrived at 6.30 p.m. with the report that the II^d Army Corps had stood in readiness at Rezonville with the 3d Infantry division since 4 p.m., with the 4th since 6 p.m. Return directions were sent to General von Fransecky that he would receive orders direct from the King. The following orders were then written out for the Crown Prince of Saxony:

"In spite of isolated infantry counter attacks of the enemy the battle appears to have been won. It is of the utmost importance, notwithstanding the great fatigue of the infantry, to advance still today on Woippy with at least one infantry brigade of the XIIth Corps to make sure of interrupting the railroad and telegraph there."¹

Before the orders were signed the Prince saw himself compelled to ride at a full gallop to the Bois de la Cusse. Up to then the 3d Infantry Brigade had stood south of Habonville. At 5.15 p.m. the Guard Rifle Battalion in front had advanced eastward and disappeared in the Bois de la Cusse, while the other parts of the brigade had taken a more southeasterly direction. Now groups of dispersed men burst from the western edge of the forest; a retreat appeared to be in full swing. The Prince halted the men, assembled them and sent them ahead again. They made only about a weak battalion composed of the different units of troops.² The Prince now turned his whole attention to the battle of the IXth Army Corps in which success favored first one and then the other side. The previously written orders were sent to the Crown Prince of Saxony at 6.40 p.m. Then General von Manstein arrived and reported the situation of the battle of the IXth Army Corps.

¹Royal Saxon Archives.—von der Goltz, *Die Operationen der II^d Armee*, p. 151. (See page 77 *ante*.)

²Statement of the (then) Lieutenant von der Goltz of the general staff of Second Army Headquarters.

VII. The Second Army Up to the Close of the Battle

THE 3D GUARD INFANTRY BRIGADE ADVANCES FOR THE ATTACK ON AMANWEILER

With great impatience General von Manstein at the north edge of the Bois de la Cusse waited for the advance of the Guard Infantry on which his own action was dependent. He had already sent one general staff officer to Headquarters of the Guard Corps to urge a hastening of the attack when he observed the advance of the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade from St. Ail toward St. Privat. He immediately decided to start his attack and to send the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade, which stood at Habonville at his disposition, toward Amanweiler. This attack was to be joined by all other troops, and only the re-assembled detachments of the 18th Infantry Division and seven companies of the 4th Hessian Infantry Regiment were to remain behind as a general reserve.

The 3d Guard Infantry Brigade had already stood about one hour in its position of readiness southeast of Habonville when, towards 5 p.m., General von Wittich, commanding the 49th Infantry Brigade, rode up to the Guard Rifle Battalion standing in the first line with the information that the Guard would advance at 5 p.m. to give the decision.¹ As a matter of fact, soon thereafter, the deployment of the 1st Battalion 1st Guard Grenadier Regiment Kaiser Alexander No. I from Habonville was perceived, as also the advance from St. Ail of the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade. Orders arrived from Headquarters Guard Corps, which paid no attention to the fact that the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade was under orders of the IXth Corps, and read that "the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade will have to support the advance of the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade on St. Privat by advancing on the right wing."²

Colonel Knappe von Knapstäd, commanding the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade, thereupon issued orders to the Guard Rifle Battalion "to occupy the piece of woods situated east of Habonville and from there interfere in the general attack of the division."³ At this moment General von Manstein arrived at the battalion and directed the battalion commander "to advance on the right wing of the Hessian division."⁴ In the meantime the Guard Rifle Battalion had, at about 5.15 p.m., commenced to cross the Bois de la Cusse in an easterly direction. It was allowed to continue in this movement, but the other troops of the brigade received a more southerly direction, to comply with General von Mannstein's orders. Colonel von Knappe directed the two battalions of the Regiment Alexander⁵ in the first line "to

¹War Archives. It is not clear on what basis this information of General von Wittich rested.

²War Archives.

³War Archives. The 2d Guard Infantry Division is meant.

⁴War Archives.

⁵2d Battalion right, Fusilier Battalion left. The 1st Battalion participated from Habonville in the attack of the 4th Infantry Brigade.

advance to the attack with its left wing at the south edge of the woods."¹ The 3d Guard Grenadier Regiment Königin Elizabeth in the second line moved with its two and a half battalions and with the 2d and 3d Field Pioneer Companies of the Guard Corps to close behind the piece of forest at knoll 316.

Within this piece of woods the Guard riflemen learned that the 3d Hessian Infantry Regiment had already occupied the eastern part of the forest. Working its way laboriously and in single file through the dense underbrush, the battalion now took a more southerly direction. The 1st and 2d Companies halted at the southeast corner of the forest at knoll 316, assembled, and established order, waiting for the other two companies to come up. So far nothing had been seen of the enemy, but the effect of his fire on the Bois de la Cusse was being felt, so that Major von Fabeck decided not to satisfy himself with mere possession of the forest, but to leave it and proceed on ahead. After this intention had been reported to the brigade commander, the 1st and 2d Companies at about 5.45 p.m. deployed strong skirmishers and, the 2d Company right, the 1st Company left, advanced in the general direction of Amanweiler in such manner that the left wing of the 1st Company moved along both sides of the ditch which runs from the south edge of Bois de la Cusse and ends at Amanweiler. The movement was made at the double time, the 3d and 4th Companies following at first one behind the other, then alongside of each other. The broad hostile front, hugging the ground at Amanweiler, received the battalion advancing thus alone with fire from the front and from the half right and half left, causing serious losses in both lines. The leading companies went about 120 meters from the east edge of the Bois de la Cusse and threw themselves down for the fire fight about 500 to 600 yards in front of the hostile line. Though previous to that nothing had been seen of the enemy, now he offered targets easily visible from a small rise in the ground. The 3d and 4th Companies farther in rear remained in motion, utilizing every protecting feature of the terrain. In this first position the battalion received an unexpected support. The commander of the Fusilier Battalion, 84th Infantry Regiment, Major Trenk who after the costly battles had reassembled three of his companies, had led them ahead along the south edge of the Bois de la Cusse behind the 3d Hessian Infantry Regiment². When he saw that the Guard Rifle Battalion had to halt under heavy losses, he with his battalion left the southeast corner of the forest. The 10th Company was in the lead, entirely deployed as skirmishers; the 11th and 12th Companies followed behind the wings of the 10th Company. To the left of the Guard Riflemen, the Fusiliers threw themselves down and kept up the fire fight until the other parts of the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade had arrived farther to the right. After this Major Trenck again took his battalion, which had lost many

¹War Archives.

²The 9th Company had become separated from the battalion when the Bois de la Cusse was first entered.

men, back into the forest where, by direct orders of General von Manstein, it remained until the end of the battle.

In the meantime the two battalions of the Regiment Alexander had crossed the woods from the center to the southwest corner at knoll 316. Here the leading Fusilier Battalion turned left against Amanweiler, placed its 12th and 9th Companies in the first line and deployed them as skirmishers under the fire of a still invisible enemy. While the other two companies were still held back within the forest the leading companies advanced by rushes of 50 meters each uninterruptedly to the front in spite of the heavy losses they suffered. When the companies arrived about on a line with the Guard Rifle Battalion—on the latter's right—a longer halt was made; then both companies joined this advanced line, which at that time endeavored to get ahead. After a few minutes the companies in rear, the 10th and 11th, came up, prolonged the fighting line on the right and carried the line forward. Only a single platoon of the 11th Company remained in close order.

The subsequent advance of the Guard Rifle Battalion proceeded very slowly; the hostile fire was too powerful. The enfilading fire from the railroad cuts on hill 322 had an especially devastating effect. Therefore the two companies of the rear line, the 3d and 4th, endeavored to prolong the first line on the left, but had little success. The left oblique necessary to do this was made under heavy losses, especially when the ditch edged with bushes behind the front of the battalion was crossed, and when shell fire also made itself felt. As a matter of fact only a few men gained the left wing; most of the men went straight to the front on both sides of the ditch and thus entered the skirmish line which had by then gained a new position, together with the Fusiliers of the Regiment Alexander, about 400 meters from the enemy. The left wing of the Guard Rifle Battalion was now in front of the southeast corner of the Bois de la Cusse and extended far enough northward not to interfere with the fire of the Hessian companies lying in the forest.

The 2d Battalion, Regiment Alexander, following the Fusilier Battalion, had received orders "to advance on the right of the Fusiliers and at the same time take over the protection of the artillery line of the IXth Corps, hitherto performed by the much weakened 1st Hessian Jäger Battalion."¹ This order brought the 2d Battalion into a different front from that of the Guard Rifle and Fusilier Battalions; the latter moved northeastward on Amanweiler, the 2d Battalion moved from hill 316 more to the southeast toward the left wing of the artillery north of Champenois. To the left front of that artillery the thinned-out companies of the 1st Hessian Jäger Battalion still performed the artillery protection though their ammunition was exceedingly short. At the double time, under a heavy hostile fire, skirmishers in front, the 5th and 8th Companies in the front line hastened to the batteries and threw themselves down directly north of the basin in which the

¹History of the Kaiser Alexander Guard Grenadier Regiment No. 1.

footpath from Verneville to Amanweiler ends. The other two companies remained farther west under cover. In this position the battalion was still in rear of the 1st Hessian Jäger Battalion but was in readiness to advance at any moment into the first line. The increasing losses soon caused the two leading companies to deploy as skirmishers, keeping only one platoon in close order. At about 6.30 p.m., at the same time that the attack of the Guard Riflemen and Fusiliers came to a stand 400 meters from the enemy, the battalion commander, Major von Schmeling, received a request from the Hessian Jägers for relief as they were entirely out of ammunition. By his orders the two rear companies took position on the left of the companies in front, utilizing for this movement the depression of the field road, and deployed as skirmishers (except one platoon) as soon as the hostile fire made itself felt. As soon as the leading line was reached the entire battalion advanced at a run, crossed the left wing of the artillery position of the IXth Army Corps, indicated by debris and dead bodies, and after several rushes gained the position of the Hessians. A part of the latter came to meet the battalion; but for the rest the relief was carried out in such manner that the Jägers evacuated their position only after the skirmishers of the Regiment Alexander had arrived. After a short halt in the position of the Hessians the entire 2d Battalion advanced again. The right wing, the 5th and 8th Companies, took direction on Montigny la Grange and, except one platoon of the 8th Company which kept to the left, reached to within 500 meters northeast of Champenois, from where the entire basin from Champenois in the direction of the enemy as far as the tent camp at Montigny la Grange could be plainly seen. The left wing sought connection with the Fusilier Battalion, Regiment Alexander, farther in front and advanced straight on hill 330 occupied by the enemy, in order to gain a foothold in a new position about 300 meters south of the Fusiliers. From this position, however, they could fire on the enemy on the hill only standing. The 2d Battalion, Regiment Alexander was thus divided into two parts separated only by a space of some 300 meters. The last movements had cost extraordinary losses, especially in officers.

While in this manner the first fighting line of the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade formed and established itself about 400 meters in front of the hostile position, the first line of the Regiment Elizabeth, consisting of the 2d and 3d Companies and the Fusilier Battalion, had left the southwest corner of the piece of woods north of knoll 316. Soon after 6 p.m. it received orders from the commander of the Regiment Alexander, Colonel von Zeuner, who had taken command when the brigade commander was wounded, to fill up the gap between the two battalions of the Regiment Alexander. As point of direction the church-steeple of Amanweiler was designated. While the 2d Battalion and the two Guard Pioneer Companies remained temporarily in the forest, the leading line, the Fusilier Battalion on the right, started without being able to see the church steeple. A new point of direction desig-

nated by Colonel von Zaluskowski, a high poplar south of Amanweiler, could not be kept to on account of the dense powder smoke. As a result the Fusilier Battalion took about the same direction which the 2d Battalion, Regiment Alexander in front had taken, on Montigny la Grange, while the half 1st Battalion endeavored to get ahead along the south edge of the Bois de la Cusse toward the village of Amanweiler.

FRENCH COUNTER ATTACKS ARE DEFEATED. THE REGIMENT
ELIZABETH INTERFERES

Of the 4th French Corps at 5 p.m. seventeen battalions occupied the space in front of Amanweiler and Montigny la Grange between the Metz—Etain railroad and hill 340, 500 meters northwest of Folie, in a position which in general ran along the road from Folie across hill 330 to Habonville. Six battalions of the Division Lorencez were in rear as reserve.¹ Of the artillery, two batteries were in the vicinity of Montigny la Grange, but they were no longer able to enter a serious battle on account of shortage of ammunition.

The fighting force of the 4th Corps being thus considerably diminished the information that the 2d Division of the Imperial Guard had arrived at St. Vincent the other side of the Montveau valley was received with all the greater joy. But the hope of receiving from this division a support which could complete the victory against an enemy who at that time had almost completely ceased firing, was to prove vain. The momentary pause in the battle did not prevent a further weakening of the French battle front in consequence of a shortage of ammunition. Shortly after 5 p.m. the 13th Line Regiment fell back from southwest of Amanweiler and joined the 43d Regiment of the same brigade which had already left the battle front for the same reason.² The resulting gap was temporarily closed by an extended development of the neighboring battalions. Thus the fighting front west and southwest of Amanweiler thinned more and more, while the battalions accumulated west of Montigny la Grange. Just as the attack of the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade commenced, the 3d Battalion, 65th Line Regiment entered the line of the 98th Line regiment from the reserve, the 2d and 3d Battalions of the 33d Line Regiment soon following it.

The appearance of the Guard Rifle and Fusilier Battalions of the Regiment Alexander at the Bois de la Cusse and south of it called out a destructive rapid fire from the French infantry west of Amanweiler. The 5th Jäger Battalion especially, having just received new ammunition, was able to throw a hot fire on the Germans. The tremendous effect of the fire among the German lines could be clearly seen; but in spite of it the two leading battalions worked their way side by side up to within 400 meters of the French position. Farther to the south the 2d Battalion, Regiment Alexander could be seen drawing on itself the

¹The three battalions, 43d Line Regiment, which had expended their ammunition, are not counted in.

²The losses of the 13th Line Regiment were considerable: Killed, 5 officers, 33 men; wounded, 13 officers, 280 men; missing, 110.

fire of the French infantry west of Montigny la Grange and coming to a halt in two widely separated groups west and southwest of knoll 330 which was occupied by the 3d Battalion of the 54th Line Regiment. Other German infantry was seen approaching farther in the rear. These observations, and the fact that another advance of infantry was seen still farther north, from the Bois de la Cusse, led to the reinforcement of the fighting line west of Amanweiler by an additional battalion of the reserve, the 1st of the 33d Line Regiment. But before this battalion had entered the first line, two offensive counter attacks were made by the French line at 6.45 p.m.

The 2d Jäger Battalion, in position at the crossroads 327, 600 meters west of Amanweiler, received from the Prussian Guard batteries north of the railroad an enfilading fire which in conjunction with the fire of the hostile infantry made its position in front very uncomfortable. The battalion commenced to give way, but was again led forward by its commander and with fixed bayonets advanced against the Fusilier Battalion, Regiment Alexander, 400 meters distant. At the same time south of it the 2d Battalion, 64th Line Regiment advanced from the reserve and, making its way through the line of battalions which was holding the poplar-edged road west of Montigny la Grange, turned against the right wing group of the 2d Battalion, Regiment Alexander.¹

When the French attack was perceived, the leaders of the Regiment Alexander stopped the firing along the lines in order to save the ammunition, which was getting short, for the close range fight. As soon as the dense skirmish lines, followed by columns, had approached to within about 250 meters of the German lines an annihilating rapid fire was poured on them. The attackers stopped; a part of them attempted to continue the charge; finally everything fled under heavy loss.

At this moment the leading six companies of the Regiment Elizabeth arrived. The Fusilier Battalion, with advanced skirmishers, had originally started in two lines, which were followed up by the other platoons in lines; subsequently all four companies had been put in one line and, after the basin had been crossed and the ridge north of Champenois had been ascended along the footpath between Verneville and Amanweiler, they turned a little to the left to again gain connection with the two companies of the 1st Battalion which were farther to the north. Suffering heavy losses the battalion, which had taken direction on hill 330, arrived with its 11th and 12th Companies in the gap between the Fusilier and the 2d Battalion, Regiment Alexander; with its 10th Company it entered the 2d Battalion, Regiment Alexander, while the 9th Company prolonged the right wing of the entire position across the Champenois—Amanweiler road toward the south.

The 2d and 3d Companies, Regiment Elizabeth, arrived a little earlier in the first line as they had taken the shorter road along the south edge of the Bois de la Cusse. They reached the right wing of

¹It cannot be stated with certainty which French battalion made this attack.

the Fusilier Battalion, Regiment Alexander, and though seriously depleted, formed a welcome reinforcement of the left battle group of the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade. Here the losses had been noticeably high. Of the Fusilier Battalion, Regiment Alexander, most of the officers, and of the Guard Rifle Battalion all of the officers were disabled, an ensign commanding this battalion; of the men of both battalions nearly one half lay on the battlefield; and what the two companies of the Regiment Elizabeth brought into the fighting line after having crossed the space in rear by rushes were only fragments.

Yet the reinforcements of the Regiment Elizabeth arrived in time to help defeat the renewed attempts at attack made by the French. Hostile cavalry also, a few squadrons strong, advanced from the vicinity of Montigny la Grange against the 2d Battalion, Regiment Alexander, but turned back when about 400 meters from the Prussian line, having been met by volleys.¹ Not all movements on the French front were, however, attempts to attack, even though they seemed such to the Germans. Just as the companies of the Regiment Elizabeth arrived on the fighting line the 1st and 2d Battalions, 15th Line Regiment turned back south of the crossroads, 600 meters west of Amanweiler, being led into this retreat by the men of the 2d Jäger Battalion who at that moment fled back after the miscarriage of their attack. Shortly afterwards the battalions were successfully led back to their former position, being encouraged by the good example of the 1st Battalion, 33d Line Regiment then entering the firing line from the second line. These movements naturally started a hot fire from the German side.

With the defeat of the French counter attacks the leading line of the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade had conquered its greatest difficulties. It is true that the opponent still kept up a sharp but not so well aimed fire, and the losses consequently decreased materially while on the other hand the German battalions found on reaching a suitable range that their careful training in firing stood them in good stead. Of course there could be no thought now of continuing the attack; only thin skirmish lines without supporting troops covered the extended position which the brigade had attained by fighting.² Shortage of ammunition here and there also prevented it and later a significant order from Colonel von Zenner to halt and defend the captured terrain was brought by the brigade adjutant. Colonel von Zenner had received information from Major von Bronsart, chief of staff of the IXth Army Corps, that one brigade of the IIId Army Corps would arrive as support and that the enveloping movement of the IXth Army Corps against the hostile right wing would not necessitate a further advance of the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade.³

Thus the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade conducted a stationary fight

¹The French General Staff Account denies this offensive attack by French cavalry. It is confirmed by the battle report of the 2d Battalion, Regiment Alexander, dated August 19, 1870.

²One platoon of the 2d Battalion, Regiment Alexander, had reached Champenois and there joined the 1st Battalion, 2d Hessian Infantry Regiment.

³War Archives.

from 7 p.m. on. Its last reserve, the 2d Battalion, Regiment Elizabeth and two Guard Pioneer Companies, were at this time drawn up closer to the front from the southwest corner of the Bois de la Cusse.

On the French side now nineteen battalions of the 4th Corps had deployed in the first line south of the railroad, weaker in front of the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade, stronger west of Montigny la Grange, where only weaker German forces stood opposite in Champenois and Envie. Only a single battalion of the Division Lorencez, the 2d of the 54th Line Regiment, was still in reserve at Amanweiler. The last two batteries had disappeared from the vicinity of Montigny la Grange.

THE ARTILLERY OF THE IIID AND IXTH ARMY CORPS SUPPORTS
THE ATTACK OF THE 3D GUARD INFANTRY BRIGADE
AND THE TROOPS AT CHANTRENNE WHERE
THE BATTLE REMAINS UNDECIDED

The attack of the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade had been effectively prepared and supported by the artillery of the IIId and IXth Corps on the ridge north of Champenois, though the fire on the hostile infantry had been slow. These seven batteries could of course assist only the right wing of the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade, as they could not see Amanweiler and the country west of it. They had a great share in defeating the hostile counter attack against the 2d Battalion, Regiment Alexander. It was soon after believed in the artillery line that there were noticeable evidences that the enemy's lines were being shaken. Similar impressions were held by the Hessian Horse and by the 5th Light Guard Batteries which were south of Champenois.¹ The enemy appeared to be already retreating through Montigny la Grange,² and the fire was therefore directed mainly towards that point.

The left wing of the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade received some support from the oblique fire directed when opportunity offered by the Guard artillery on the other side of the railroad; but there could be no regular coöperation by the artillery at this point. Because of the general conformation of the terrain, the Hessian batteries in position north of the Bois de la Cusse were unable to fire effectively on the enemy at Amanweiler; their fire remained directed against targets at and north of the railroad.

The 2d Battalion, Foot Artillery, IIId Army Corps, after its unfortunate attempt to advance from its position southeast of Verneville, had merely directed its fire in part on the far off targets at Montigny la Grange and in part on the woods of la Charmoise, occupied by infantry. In spite of the short range the success attained at the latter place was inconsiderable. Occasionally, indeed, it appeared as if the enemy within the forest had been silenced, but his fire broke out

¹The Hessian battery fired only with two pieces.

²War Archives.

again each time the opposing German infantry at Chantrenne offered a good target.

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THE 3D GUARD INFANTRY BRIGADE ENTERS THE HOSTILE POSITION AT AMANWEILER

The general offensive ordered by Prince Frederick Charles and executed by General von Manstein was made that evening only by the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade and two neighboring companies of the 18th Infantry Division. Expecting the arrival of the III^d Army Corps placed at his disposal for support by the Prince, General von Manstein had sent orders to join the general advance to the still closed up parts of the 3d Infantry Brigade¹ and to Colonel von Winckler, commanding the 84th Infantry Regiment, who had assembled under his command the parts of the 18th Infantry Division gathered together in the Bois de la Cusse. At this time the situation of the battalions of the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade deployed in the first line was, after the successful defeat of the French counter attack, though not actually endangered, scarcely favorable owing to shortage of ammunition. Among the Guard Rifles in front of the southeast corner of the Bois de la Cusse, and the battalions of the 1st Guard Grenadier Regiment Kaiser Alexander farther south, some companies had no cartridges left; others had only about four or five rounds per man. The ammunition of the dead had long since been used up; the ammunition brought back by wounded returning from the dressing station was insufficient. The six companies of the Regiment Elizabeth were more fortunate; they had not arrived in the firing line until later. On the left wing, where were the Guard Rifles, the Fusilier Battalion, Regiment Alexander, the 2d and 3d Companies, Regiment Elizabeth, the condition of the troops after the previous horrible losses was scarcely satisfactory. On the right wing the 2d Battalion, Regiment Alexander and the Fusilier Battalion, Regiment Elizabeth, had not suffered so much as they had been ably supported by the artillery. An attempt was made from here to gain space toward the front, and single detachments commenced to envelop from the southwest knoll 330 occupied by the enemy. From other parts of the line skirmish groups had also worked their way up to within 200 meters of the opponent. It was a great help to the left wing of the brigade that after the last change of position of the Hessian batteries these, in conjunction with the Guard batteries farther north, could direct their fire on the enemy south of the railroad. It was not easy for the few skirmishers in the line of the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade to get a good aim on the enemy who was completely enveloped by powder smoke and, in addition, was under good cover. Only the flash of his rifles indicated the target for the needle guns. As the Prussian skirmishers lay not along one line but echeloned, in the increasing darkness some of the men in front were

¹2d Battalion, Regiment Elizabeth and two Guard Pioneer companies.

hit by the bullets of the men in rear. Several times the rear lines had to be called on to cease firing.

When Colonel von Winckler received General von Manstein's orders to join the general advance, he designated for this the 2d and 3d Companies, 36th Fusilier Regiment, or rather what was left of them, and the 2d and 4th Companies of the 84th Infantry Regiment, which so far had suffered least from the hostile fire. In the advance through the forest the two Fusilier companies went to the left and no longer participated in the advance. The Musketeer companies left the Bois de la Cusse one behind the other through the southern exit of the glade which divides the eastern part of the forest into two parts, and, after having been joined by a number of Guardsmen who had been left behind, gradually deployed in skirmish line, and prolonged the left wing of the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade in front of the Bois de la Cusse. By direction of its commander the 2d Battalion, Regiment Elizabeth had anticipated General von Manstein's orders for the advance by moving from the southwest corner of the woods along the railroad somewhat farther to the front. Lieutenant Colonel von Bernhardt now caused the 7th and 6th Companies to advance in the first line south of the Bois de la Cusse, while the 5th and 8th Companies, as last closed reserve, were to follow at some distance. The leading companies were met by noncommissioned officers of the Regiment Alexander who were seeking ammunition and who reported its shortage with every sign of great agitation. The 6th Company entered the gap between the battalions of the Regiment Alexander, which had been but incompletely filled by the leading companies of the Regiment Elizabeth, and furnished the men there with some ammunition. Farther north the 7th Company arrived very soon after. At this point the German line had approached to within 200 meters of the enemy and the final assault appeared imminent as the closed half-battalion of the Regiment Elizabeth was coming up to reinforce the skirmish line and carry it forward. But the first breach was not to be made at this point.

On the right wing the 2d Battalion, Regiment Alexander, and the neighboring Fusilier Companies, Regiment Elizabeth, became the target of a sudden hostile attack. On the ridge north of Champenois the figures of the Grenadiers silhouetted themselves clearly against the glow of the sinking sun; this undoubtedly induced the French to open an unexpected rapid fire and then, to the sound of trumpets and drums, to charge with equally unexpected fury. Because of the shortage of ammunition the situation was very critical; there was a dearth of officers; nevertheless calm commands rang out: "Load! Fire first at 100 paces!" These directions were strictly followed and the intrepidly charging enemy was received at short range with a well aimed point blank fire, causing his line first to halt, then flee hastily back. Some of the companies of the Regiment Alexander having no ammunition with which to pour a pursuing fire on the enemy, the 6th and

7th Companies, joined by a part of the 8th Company, followed the enemy with the bayonet, while the other part of the 8th and the 5th Company remained prone and kept up the fire. At places the enemy was overtaken and the bayonet brought into play.

This charge together with the approach of the still intact part of the 2d Battalion was the signal for the Fusilier Battalion, Regiment Elizabeth to take up the assault, and with loud hurrahs the Fusiliers hurled themselves against the hostile position. Knoll 330 formed the attack objective for the right wing of the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade. There the assault became blocked; some groups halted to exchange shots with the still firing enemy; others crossed the enemy's former position south of the knoll for a short distance, then came to a halt to get their breath and to assemble. Although the enemy was retreating on Amanweiler the country west of the village was still occupied by numerous hostile detachments preparing for renewed resistance and the weak German companies did not dare to advance farther. A retreat even was made in part to reestablish order. Past these retreating groups the Fusilier companies, Regiment Elizabeth, which had started a little later, charged and captured hill 330. Falling darkness caused disorder and friction; friend could not be distinguished from foe and it happened again and again that one German detachment fired into another.¹ Hurrahs and loud shouts quickly remedied this. But the success was indisputable and the enemy evacuated his position.

The shouts and the assault spread from the right wing along the line to the left, where the arrival in close order of the last half-battalion of the Regiment Elizabeth had been impatiently awaited as the signal to the assault.

This half-battalion was still about 50 meters distant from the first line when the command "Forward!" put everything in motion. North of knoll 330 the 6th and 7th Companies, Regiment Elizabeth charged and entered the hostile position. They were joined on the left by the 2d and 3d Companies—under one first sergeant—the Fusilier Battalion, Regiment Alexander, the Guard Rifle Battalion—under an ensign—and the two Companies of the 84th Infantry Regiment. The hostile resistance no longer amounted to anything; immediately north of knoll 330 the charge of the right wing, having passed that point, had an especially good effect. Here parts of the line halted in the abandoned position, while others—in particular the 7th Company, Regiment Elizabeth—pursued the enemy in the direction of Amanweiler where several bayonet fights occurred. Farther north the enemy did not evacuate his positions as easily. *Mêlées* ensued at several points and the fire fight also was renewed, bringing however few losses to the Germans as the French fired very poorly at close range. In several instances parts of the enemy, after leaving the first position, again faced about—once opposite the Fusilier Battalion, Regiment Alexan-

¹ War Archives.

der—as a matter of fact not in order to continue the resistance, but to surrender. But the sudden reopening of fire prevented this and a hand to hand encounter ensued which ended in the wild flight of the French toward Amanweiler and their disappearance in the darkness.

Thus at the fall of dusk—it was now toward 8 p.m.—it was granted the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade to enter the hostile position for the possession of which it had fought for more than two hours. The enemy had retreated; single detachments following him toward Amanweiler encountered resistance; but a general pursuit could not be attempted because of the exhaustion of the troops and the increasing darkness. The fire died down gradually, only occasionally reopening. The guns of the artillery northwest of Champenois, which had supported the assault as much as lay within their power as long as friend could be distinguished from foe, were long since silent; but they still were in their positions to be in readiness for any eventuality.

In the ninth evening hour Colonel von Zaluskowski issued orders to assemble the Regiment Elizabeth and the companies of the 2d Battalion which still were in close order. Only gradually could the straightening out of the disorganized and mixed units proceed. Interruptions by dispersed and lost hostile detachments were frequent.¹ The 2d Battalion, Regiment Alexander assembled on the right on hill 330 without serious difficulties and was led back in two echelons to the Bois de la Cusse. On the left the Fusilier Battalion, Regiment Alexander, and the Guard Rifle Battalion while assembling suddenly received an enfilading fire which came from the railroad and not only demanded a series of sacrifices, but in the tumult gave the French prisoners a chance to escape. The lost French detachment which caused this interruption narrowly escaped falling into the hands of the 3d Hessian Infantry Regiment which still held the east edge of the Bois de la Cusse and was waiting for this chance; but the French detachment escaped in time.

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THE FRENCH CORPS EVACUATES THE POSITIONS WEST OF AMANWEILER AND MONTIGNY LA GRANGE

At the first assault of the 3d Guard Infantry Brigade the numerous reserves were plentifully inserted in the line of the 4th French Corps between the Metz—Etain railroad and Folie; other supports evidently were counted on and the arrival at St. Vincent of the 2d Division of the Imperial Guard under General Picard apparently justified this expectation. General de Ladmirault sent to the other side of the Montveau valley an adjutant who, at about 6.15 p.m., brought to the commander of the Imperial Guard, General Bourbaki, a request to lead the Division Picard to the battlefield of the 4th Corps and thus

¹A hostile detachment suddenly coming up even demanded the surrender of one platoon of the 7th Company, which was protecting the assembly of the regiment. A rapid fire was the answer.

secure the victory with fresh troops. General Bourbaki showed little inclination for this for he had already observed the retreat of the men of the 6th Corps; but he assented to it and, with the Guard Zouave Regiment, the 1st Guard Grenadier Regiment and two batteries, crossed the strip of woods between the forest of Saulny and the Montveau valley in the direction of Amanweiler. But on the other side of this strip of woods the pressure of fleeing masses in the vicinity of St. Privat and the confusion of troops and vehicles in the rear of the 4th Corps became so apparent that he believed that everything was retreating. In order not to involve the Division Picard in the general confusion and to regain the plateau of St. Vincent, which appeared to him extremely suited for defense, he caused the command to face about. This retrograde movement caused among the fleeing and wounded in that vicinity a panic which spread also to a part of the trains of the 4th Corps. In wild flight the confused mass of men, horses and vehicles ran back on the road to Lorry. The panic was brought to an end by two batteries of the artillery reserve of the 3d Corps which had then been for some three hours at St. Vincent and which blocked the road decisively to the oncoming mass, taking position squarely across the road from Amanweiler to Lorry. Even the Guard troops had for a short time lost their confidence. At 7 p.m. the Division Picard was again on the plateau of St. Vincent and the support on which the 4th Corps had counted did not materialize.

Knowledge of this reached the commander of the 4th Corps, General de Ladmirault, simultaneously with other more serious information. He learned that the neighboring 6th Corps was in full retreat and also received a report from his right wing, Division Cisse, north of the railroad, asking for orders in view of an envelopment threatening from the north. General Ladmirault did not deceive himself in regard to the fact that it now was time for the 4th Corps to prepare for itself a receiving position for the retreat; he sent a corresponding request to General Bourbaki and ordered General Cisse to take his 1st Division back to the west edge of the forest of Saulny. General Lorencez was directed to hold the heights west of Amanweiler—Montigny la Grange as long as possible. General Leboeuf, commanding the 3d Corps, was requested to send a few battalions of his reserves at Folie to Amanweiler. Then General Ladmirault rode to the quarries at Amanweiler, where he encountered the larger part of his batteries and troops of the Division Cisse.

The retreat of that division, north of the railroad, had commenced about 7 p.m. The artillery, being short of ammunition and subjected without protection to the fire of the Hessian batteries, was the first to take up the retreat, falling back on the quarries of Amanweiler. The infantry of the division at and on knoll 322 did not feel itself so much endangered by the approaching Hessian infantry in its front as by the Prussian Guard which stood in front of its right wing on ridge 321. To prevent an envelopment the last infantry regiment of the rear

echelon, the 1st Line Regiment, had been advanced in a northwesterly direction against hill 321. Though the entire infantry suffered under the shell fire of the Hessian and Prussian Guard batteries this regiment was placed in a far more precarious situation, as it offered its flank to the hostile fire. The movement had no success.

Of the infantry the 57th and the 73d Line Regiments were the first to fall back in the direction of the quarries of Amanweiler and they were followed by the remaining troops. Knoll 322, as well as the railroad cut east of the railroad guard's house, remained occupied by the skirmishers so that the Hessian fighting line opposite actually had in its front until dark an opponent who used his arms. In the main body of the division, which fell back under German shell fire, such a complete dissolution of formations took place in the dark that General Cissey could gather together of it at the quarries only fragments with which he marched off to Metz between 8 and 9 p.m.

With the retreat of the Division Cissey the space immediately south of the railroad was evacuated by French troops. The right wing of the fighting line in front of Amanweiler and Montigny la Grange, composed of a mixture of troops of the Divisions Grenier and Lorencez, consequently felt its flank threatened, the more so as several German companies had assembled at the railroad guard's house and had within the last few minutes been reinforced. Though these companies showed no inclination to attack and were able to fire on the French fighting line only by small advanced detachments, and as the Prussian Guard troops hugging the ground in front also made no move, the 5th and 2d Jäger Battalions of the right wing fell back close to Amanweiler on the east. The 1st Battalion, 54th Line Regiment, which had been between the two Jäger battalions, also faced about but resumed its original front after having gone a short distance, so that the French right wing was not completely bare. It was mainly the enfilading fire of the Guard and Hessian troops north of the railroad which caused these retrograde movements.

For the rest not much change for the time being occurred in the French position. It was nearing 8 p.m. when a sudden advance of the 1st Battalion, 65th Line Regiment, from the center of the French front against the opposite right wing of the German fighting front induced, not a counter attack, but a general offensive of the German troops deployed between the Bois de la Cusse and Amanweiler. This general attack caused a general retreat of the French troops, except the battalions west of Montigny la Grange—a giving way which of course could in no way be designated as a retreat or flight and which merely permitted the Germans to occupy the abandoned position. Very close behind the original fighting line a new line was formed offering resistance to the on-pressing German troops. Seven French battalions again made front between the original position and Amanweiler while the remainder marched off in the direction of that village. The fire fight continued; contacts occurred, leading to mêlées. In consequence

of the hostile fire, the darkness, and the absence of all orders for the execution of the retreat, there was much confusion in the French ranks where the losses during the long battle had been heavy.

While the French already were in retreat west of Amanweiler five reinforcing battalions, sent by General Leboeuf, approached from the south. Of them the 1st and 3d Battalions, 71st Line Regiment only reached the edge of the forest facing north of the Montveau valley east of Folie and remained halted there; the 41st Line Regiment marched beyond Folie and Montigny la Grange and, formed in two lines, advanced northwest, drums beating and bugles sounding. It was now completely dark; only the burning villages and farm buildings lighted up the country. The regiment nowhere encountered German troops and it arrived in the new French fighting line southwest of Amanweiler, where it found connection with two battalions, 15th Line Regiment. The later it grew, the greater the number of French troops which fled back, and the battle gradually ceased. Single battalions retreated out of the massed battalions west of Montigny la Grange. At 9 p.m. there were still thirteen battalions assembled in or in rear of the position. Two hours later the entire Division Lorencez, except two battalions, was assembled on the other side of the Montveau valley at St. Vincent; the 1st and 3d Battalions, 33d Line Regiment, had moved with the 41st Line Regiment of the 3d Corps to Montigny la Grange where, secured by outposts, they passed a part of the night. Of the Division Grenier, two battalions, 64th Line Regiment, and the 98th Line Regiment had remained west of Montigny la Grange and went into their old bivouacs there, placing pickets out.

As a matter of fact, the right wing and the center of the position of the 4th Corps were fully evacuated during the night; Amanweiler was free except for the numerous wounded lying in the burning village. On the left wing ten battalions bivouacked around Montigny la Grange. The right wing division of the 3d Corps, Montaudon, occupied during the night the woods of la Charmoise with two companies, while the six battalions which had defended those woods bivouacked behind them. At the clearing between them and the northeast projection of the Genivaux forest were three battalions.

Farther in rear strong parts of the 4th Corps, especially the artillery and the Division Picard of the Imperial Guard, which had again been brought forward a little, awaited at the quarries of Amanweiler and on the road between the village and the quarries the complete departure of the 6th Corps from St. Privat. Then the retreat proper was taken up on the roads through Woippy and Lorry toward Metz. Only the 7th Hussar Regiment still remained for a time at the forest of Saulny. The troops which had remained west of the Montois valley left their positions very early on the 19th without being interfered with by the Germans. A single German squadron met the battalions of the 64th and 98th Line Regiments when they retreated from Montigny la Grange through Amanweiler to St. Vincent.

THE GREAT GENERAL STAFF
HEADQUARTERS SECOND ARMY UP TO THE CLOSE
OF THE BATTLE

When Prince Frederick Charles shortly after 7 p.m. gave General von Alvensleben permission to advance for an attack with the IIId Army Corps south of the Bois de la Cusse, he intended to start also the Xth Army Corps behind the Guard Corps, and have it participate in the general offensive. Orders were sent at 7.15 p.m. to General von Voigts-Rhetz "to advance offensively as seemed best to him, preferably with one division between the Guard and the XIIth Army Corps, holding back one division behind the left wing of the IXth Army Corps."¹ The Prince did not realize that the Xth Army Corps had already become engaged in the battle around St. Privat. Finally orders were sent also to the IId Army Corps, which shortly before had been directed to report to the King for orders, to Rezonville "to interfere as seemed best and as quickly as possible and to report its decision to the King."² The Prince, who was ignorant of actual conditions with the IId Army Corps, added to the orders, verbally to Major von Niesewand, first adjutant of army headquarters, who was to carry them that the battle was won and that the IId Army Corps was at liberty to gather some of the laurels.³ The entire Second Army now had been inserted for a last decisive attack and the Prince considered it advisable to inform himself again as to the situation of the battle on the left wing, especially also to ascertain where and how the XIIth Army Corps was engaged. He rode over to Habonville and viewed the battlefield north of the Bois de la Cusse. Little was to be seen of St. Privat; dense powder smoke hid the village and neighboring heights. But he plainly perceived the long line of the Guard artillery fully turned against St. Privat and the southern ridge; and the flashes of the pieces north of the Ste. Marie—St. Privat road justified the conclusion that there the artillery of other corps, probably the Xth and XIIth, had entered the battle, surrounding St. Privat from the north. As Second Army Headquarters believed that village to have been long since in German hands, it was thought that this fire could be directed only against French troops holding their positions north of Amanweiler and the defeat of which would be only a question of time in the further progress of the envelopment. Satisfied with these impressions Prince Frederick Charles returned to his position at the Bois de la Cusse. From there the information officer of Royal Headquarters, Lieutenant Colonel von Brandenstein, reported at 7.35 p.m. to General von Moltke the Prince's last measures adding that the battle was progressing at all points.

Headquarters Second Army soon was disabused in its beliefs, however. Ten minutes later a report arrived from General von Alvensleben to the effect that his IIId Army Corps was being attacked

¹War Archives.

²War Archives.

³Statement of the then Major von Niesewand. The orders did not reach the IId Army Corps, as it had started for St. Hubert.

in the right flank, that he was compelled to keep his forces together and that he could send no troops for the support of the IXth Army Corps. With this the planned general attack of the Second Army became a questionable move as far as the IXth Army Corps was concerned, and the general situation doubtful. The fears thus created were however soon dispersed as it was ascertained that the fire again opening up on the right flank was not directed against parts of the Second Army. But the increasing darkness made it appear inadvisable to again insert the IIId Army Corps for the attack. Therefore General von Alvensleben was ordered at 8 p.m. to occupy with one infantry regiment each of the villages Doncourt and Caulre and to go with the main body in bivouac, placing outposts, just where it then was.¹ At 8.15 p.m. a report arrived from Crown Prince Albert of Saxony in reply to the orders issued him at 6.40 p.m. to send one infantry brigade to Woippy to block the road to the north to the enemy. The Crown Prince wrote:

"August 18, 7.10 p.m. The cavalry has already received orders to interrupt the railroad at Hagondange and Richemont. In addition cavalry with pioneers on wagons have been sent for the same purpose through Briey.

"As St. Privat is not yet taken and as the road is therefore not yet open, one brigade will be sent through Roncourt and Marange to Maizières."²

This report brought out the astonishing fact that St. Privat, believed to have been in the hands of the Guard Corps since 6.30 p.m., had not yet been taken at 7.10 p.m. when this report was sent. The entire favorable picture of the battle was now dimmed. To the questions sent out asking what had been done answers soon arrived. Verbal reports of 8 p.m. reported the fall of St. Privat, but also brought the news of the enormous losses, especially those of the Guard Corps. The victory appeared indeed to be certain, but the details which now became known made the situation, opposed to an energetic and stubborn enemy, appear not entirely without danger, especially considering the heavy losses. In the meantime the firing in the Second Army ceased almost entirely; darkness had completely set in; St. Privat, Amanweiler and Montigny la Grange were burning. At 8.30 p.m. in the presence of General von Manstein the following orders for the night were issued by the light of burning grain sheaves:³

* * *

At 8.45 Prince Frederick Charles rode from the Bois de la Cusse through Jouaville to Doncourt. He carried along a feeling of an unusually hard won victory and also the apprehension that the French might still be fortunate enough to escape north in the valley of the Mosel. The strategic situation of the enemy had of course become exceedingly unfavorable in that he had been driven back

¹War Archives.

²War Archives; also Von der Goltz, *Die Operationen der IId Armee*, p. 151. (Page 77, *ante*.)

³For order see p. 81, *ante*.

to Metz; but he had all the more cause to utilize the only remaining chance for escape. The Prince was still firmly convinced that the enemy's main intention on August 18th had been, not the resistance on the heights west of Metz, but escape into the interior of France. The apprehension that the enemy would escape northward was dispelled only within the next few days.¹

THE XIITH ARMY CORPS COMPLETES ITS DEPLOYMENT

From the hill west of Ste. Marie aux Chênes Crown Prince Albert of Saxony watched the completion of the deployment and enveloping movements of his troops. To his great surprise he saw, between 5 and 6 p.m., the Guard infantry advancing from St. Ail and Ste. Marie against St. Privat and the heights south of it.²

He thus believed that the Guard Corps had thought it advisable not to await the completion of the envelopment of the Saxons which had been started through Montois la Montagne, though that intention was known to the Guard Corps. During the advance of the Guard the Crown Prince took care that the subsequent attack of the enveloping column, the 48th Infantry Brigade, on Roncourt, which ought to have appeared on the heights of Montois la Montagne at about 6 p.m., should be supported by the other troops of the army corps. At 5.30 p.m. the 47th Infantry Brigade, assembled at the northwest corner of Ste. Marie aux Chênes, received orders to advance to the south edge of the woods of Auboué, which woods were then occupied by the 45th Infantry Brigade; the 46th Infantry Brigade was to march there from Moineville.

The corps artillery, deployed between Ste. Marie aux Chênes and the woods of Auboué, was directed to advance farther in the direction of Roncourt to prepare the attack on that village.

The ordered movements of the 46th and 47th Infantry Brigades had been completed by 6.15 p.m.; the 46th, halting at the west edge of the woods, was to remain in reserve. By some mistake the artillery of the 24th Division, in position immediately north of Ste. Marie aux Chênes, joined the march of the 47th Infantry Brigade from Ste. Marie aux Chênes to the woods, ceasing the fire they had opened to support the Guard and limbering up by batteries to the rear. When it arrived behind the corps artillery the latter was just starting to go toward Roncourt. Not to interrupt the fire entirely, the change of position was to be made by battalions; but, because the artillery units were already mixed up, and because of the extraordinary weariness of the horses, the change was made by batteries, which took much time. The first advancing batteries³ sought out a new position first immediately east of the ravine of Homecourt, then advanced farther to the space south of the east part of the woods of Auboué. Into this

¹Statements of the (then) Lieutenant von der Goltz, general staff of Second Army Headquarters.

²Posthumous papers of General von Pape.

³Among them the 6th Heavy, which up to then had been furthest in rear.

new position the last batteries of the corps artillery came only when Roncourt was in German hands. The undirected 2d Foot Artillery Battalion of the 24th Infantry Division also received orders from the Crown Prince to go into position to support the infantry attack on Roncourt, and take position to the left of the corps artillery. But there was room there only for two batteries, so that the other two had to halt in rear in march column.

By 6.45 p.m. seven batteries¹ had arrived in the first line and directed their fire on Roncourt, which had also been heavily fired on from the first chosen intermediate position. The main opponent up to that time, the hostile artillery between Roncourt and St. Privat, which had fired on the advancing Guard infantry, had by that time again disappeared; the batteries had also fired on hostile infantry at Roncourt and on hostile cavalry which had shown itself for a short time in the vicinity of Roncourt. Roncourt now became the main target and the infantry designated to attack the village had commenced very soon after 6 p.m. to advance upon it. About this time the 48th Infantry Brigade appeared on the hill of Montois la Montagne and this caused the 45th Infantry Brigade, in pursuance of orders from Prince George, to start its attack from the woods of Auboué.

The enveloping column had made a hot and tiresome march in the Orne valley; especially disagreeable was the heavy dust on the Auboué—Joeuf chalk road which the column, by passing Auboué on the east, reached about 400 meters northeast of the village. The enormous clouds of dust from there to the Ste. Marie—Homecourt road, where the highroad rises up to the east end of the valley, had been visible from far off. The infantry of the 48th Brigade was in the lead; the batteries of the 23d Infantry Division and the mass of the Saxon cavalry following.² While still in the valley of the Orne reports arrived that the enemy was still occupying Montois la Montagne.³ The leader of the enveloping column, Colonel von Schultz, when the northwestern vicinity of Montois la Montagne was reached therefore ordered:

"The 8th Infantry Regiment (107) ascends the side of the valley in front, the 3d Battalion deployed in column of companies as first line, the 1st and 2d Battalions in the second line, and advances straight on Montois la Montagne; the 7th Infantry Regiment (106) goes around the projecting part of the declivity on the left and attempts to attack the village on the hostile left flank. The Jäger Battalion follows the 8th Regiment as reserve."⁴

Thereupon the 3d Battalion, 107th Infantry Regiment received orders from the regimental commander, "to advance demonstratively against the west front of Montois la Montagne and to hold the enemy's attention until the envelopment ordered by the brigade commander for

¹Serial arrival: 2d Horse, 5th Light, 6th Heavy, 7th Heavy, 5th Heavy, 4th Heavy, 4th Light. Farther in rear, 3d Heavy, 3d Light, 8th Heavy, 6th Light.

²Of the batteries of the 23d Infantry Division only three were with the 48th Infantry Brigade; the 1st Heavy Battery was with the 46th Infantry Brigade.

³Royal Saxon War Archives. This report is said to have been brought by a Prussian Guard Hussar officer; according to other sources the same report was also brought by Saxon cavalry detachments.

⁴Royal Saxon War Archives.

attack of the north front of the village is completed."¹ The actual attack of the 3d Battalion on the west was to be made simultaneously with the attack of the 106th Regiment on the north.

The battalion commander caused skirmishers to be deployed and start for Montois la Montagne, to be followed by two companies on the road from Homecourt to Montois la Montagne, while the other two companies accompanied the attack on the right and left with 120 meters interval. On the left of the 3d Battalion followed the 2d, on the right the 1st Battalion; these were followed in turn by the 13th Jäger Battalion. The ascent up the declivity toward Montois la Montagne led through an open space in the forest 200 meters broad, was made difficult by quarries, loose rocks and brush, and took much time and expenditure of strength. Farther east the battalions of the 106th Regiment climbed up the steep side of the valley, the 3d Battalion leading. When this battalion received fire from the strip of woods along the eastern edge of the Orne—probably from stragglers or from a patrol—the 12th Company obliques to the left and, after having traversed the forest, took the direction to the left. Working its way along the edge of the forest and gradually formed in two lines, it gained the road to Malancourt. The 1st Battalion followed in similar formation.

The 9th Company of the 3d Battalion, 107th Infantry Regiment, remained behind when climbing the difficult side, so that only three companies could deploy for the planned attack against the west side of Montois la Montagne. A few shots were fired from the village; but very soon it was seen that the village was not occupied except by a patrol of the 100th Line Regiment.² The battalion traversed the village and remained halted at the south edge to await the arrival of the 106th Infantry Regiment, but sent one company on ahead into the woods between Montois la Montagne and Roncourt. These woods were also found to be free of the enemy. In the meantime the other two battalions of the 107th Infantry Regiment and those of the 106th Infantry Regiment had gone around Montois la Montagne on the west and north and taken direction on Roncourt.

Now the artillery and cavalry were brought up from the valley of the Orne. The 1st Light Battery first went into position at Montois la Montagne to fire a few rounds on Roncourt, and then joined the advance of the 107th Infantry Regiment. The 2d Light Battery was sent to follow up the 106th Infantry Regiment, but soon joined the 1st Light Battery. Its place behind the 106th Regiment was taken by the 2d Heavy Battery. The 1st and 2d Cavalry Regiments followed the 107th Infantry Regiment, while the two regiments present of the 12th Cavalry Division took a more easterly direction.³ They marched behind the 106th Infantry Regiment into position at the woods between Montois la Montagne and Malancourt. The attached 1st Horse Battery

¹ Royal Saxon War Archives.

² Two men of this patrol were killed, one captured.

³ The Guard and the 3d Cavalry Regiment, of which each one had sent one squadron into the valley of the Mosel to interrupt railroad and telegraph.

went into position at the southwest corner of the small wood, to fire on infantry visible in the direction of the forest edges south of Malancourt.

The general staff officer of the 23d Infantry Division, Captain von Treitschke, had been busy in bringing up the batteries and afterwards had stationed himself east of Montois la Montagne. He perceived hostile infantry detachments retreating from the eastern vicinity of Roncourt toward the forest of Jaumont¹ and thought he could also see the enemy at Malancourt.² In consequence of these observations the commander of the 106th Infantry Regiment, Colonel von Abendroth, ordered the 3d Battalion to turn with three companies against Malancourt, while he himself with the 12th Company and the 1st Battalion held to the march direction toward the northeast corner of Roncourt. With these five companies, followed by the 13th Jäger Battalion, Colonel von Abendroth arrived opposite the small wood between Montois la Montagne and Roncourt where the 107th Infantry Regiment had also arrived. The latter had with its 3d Battalion occupied the south edge of the wood, the other two were echeloned somewhat to the right rear. Behind the infantry the three batteries which had followed them now went into position. The 2d Heavy Battery on the left wing fired on the hostile infantry at the forest of Jaumont; the 1st and 2d Light turned their fire against Roncourt which thus was attacked from two sides, from the north and from the woods of Auboué. By this time it was 6.45 p.m.

Soon after 6 p.m. Crown Prince Albert had proceeded to the woods of Auboué to be closer to the decision. Prince George there watched the deployment of the 45th Infantry Brigade which had the same attack objective as the enveloping column.

When the right wing of the 48th Infantry Brigade arrived beyond Montois la Montagne, the 1st Battalion, 101st Grenadier Regiment started in an easterly direction on Roncourt from the north edge of the eastern projection of the woods of Auboué. As soon as it came opposite the Body Grenadier Regiment No. 100 this regiment also started, in two lines; in the first line were the 3d and 1st Battalions, in the second, the 2d Battalion in two half-battalions alongside each other. Behind the right wing of the Body Grenadier Regiment and awaiting orders for the advance were the 2d and 3d Battalions, 101st Grenadier Regiment which already had been brought up from the western edge of the woods passing along the southern edge. Halted as reserve at the east corner of the woods was the 108th Rifle Regiment only single parts of which had earlier than this moved toward Roncourt and were in the first line. During the subsequent advance the left wing of the 45th encountered the right wing of the 46th Infantry Brigade west of the woods between Montois la Montagne and Roncourt. Roncourt thus was surrounded by the Saxon Infantry on a shallow arc facing the southeast. The entire line was in movement forward when suddenly

¹ 1st Battalion, 9th Line Regiment.

² It is stated that fire came from Malancourt; French uniforms were seen there.

a Red Hussar on a white horse was seen from afar galloping from the south toward the right wing of the 48th Infantry Brigade.

This was the orderly officer of General von Pape, Lieutenant von Esbeck, called von Platen, of the Guard Hussar Regiment. Ordered to have Saxon batteries fire on St. Privat and to find out where the XIIth Army Corps was, he had ridden at the most rapid gait from the Ste. Marie—St. Privat road along the separated parts of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade to the large basin, had crossed that, and taken the direction of the woods of Auboué. He ascertained that north of the large basin the left wing of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade was still very far from its apparent attack objective, Roncourt, and appeared to require urgently the support of other troops. After he had ridden past the front of the 1st Battalion, 3d Guard Regiment north of the large basin and had given that battalion information of the situation at St. Privat, he saw the advancing Saxon infantry west of the small wood between Montois la Montagne and Roncourt and rode to meet it.

He first met the commanders of the 1st and 2d Battalions, 107th Infantry Regiment who referred him to the regimental commander, Lieutenant Colonel von Schweinitz. He reported to the latter that the Guard urgently required support in the flank, and, after a short discussion, the lieutenant colonel decided to abandon the direction on Roncourt, which appeared not to be occupied, and to have the 1st and 2d Battalions advance on St. Privat, passing Roncourt on the west. Report of the new march direction was sent to brigade headquarters.¹ Lieutenant von Esbeck rode back and, at the southeast corner of the woods of Auboué, encountered the 2d and 3d Battalions, 101st Grenadier Regiment, with whom was the brigade commander, Major General von Craushaar. He asked that general also to support the Guard and the general agreed to send the two battalions at once in the direction of St. Privat and also sent orders to this effect to the 100th Body Regiment. These orders were executed only by the left wing of the latter regiment, the 3d Battalion and the companies of the 2d Battalion in its rear, as the adjutant who was to carry these orders to the right wing lost his horse. Through the efforts of Lieutenant von Esbeck, a total of five and one half battalions left the Saxon line to turn toward St. Privat, while the remaining troops continued in the direction of Roncourt. Frictions and crossings naturally occurred during the subsequent advance.

Lieutenant von Esbeck had no orders to divert the Saxon advance on St. Privat. He acted independently under the impression that the left wing of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade north of the large basin did not make any progress toward Roncourt; also it was not his intention to draw the Saxons onto St. Privat but only to hasten their advance on Roncourt, which he believed to be still occupied. It was again an independent decision of the Saxon leaders when they took the direction on St. Privat, where they perceived the main focus of

¹ The report did not reach its destination, as the officer carrying it was killed.

the battle to be and they of course left Roncourt on one side, because it apparently had already been evacuated by the enemy. Lieutenant von Esbeck could ride back to his division commander with the knowledge that now the battle north of the road would come to a victorious end. South of the large basin he encountered General von Kessel and called to him: "The victory is ours! The Saxons are coming." The general grasped him by the hand. The same message he called out to the skirmishers of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade when passing them. They replied to it with cheers.¹

THE 6TH CORPS IS IN READINESS TO DEFEAT THE GERMAN
ATTACK ON ST. PRIVAT

The orders of Marshal Canrobert for the security of the now unavoidable retreat of the 6th Corps on Metz had been executed by 7 p.m. Fourteen and a half battalions crowded into St. Privat to defend that place. The units were so mixed up that there could be no attempt to assign specific organizations to the defense of the several points.²

Facing northwest stood the 2d Battalion of the 9th Line Regiment north of St. Privat and fired on the approaching Saxons and also on the Prussian Guards coming from the west. The 1st Battalion, same regiment, which was retreating from Roncourt to the edge of the forest of Jaumont, had taken up the fire fight. The defensive flank, arranged by Marshal Canrobert east of St. Privat, was formed by two battalions, 100th Line Regiment, a little north of the road leading from the village to Chateau Jaumont. Farther east, on the same line, the 2d Regiment Chasseurs d'Afrique stood at the forest; it had participated with one squadron in the gradually increasing fire fight against the envelopment of Roncourt. Behind the defensive flank east of the village was the 94th Line Regiment, less three companies; the three absent companies defended the western edge of the village; the Dragoon Brigade Bruchard also was behind that defensive flank. Still farther in rear, in the angle between the edge of the forest and the road from Jerusalem to Marengo, there stood in large squares the 75th and 91st Line Regiments, which were a little later joined by the 93d and the 2d Battalion, 10th Line Regiments. At the road itself were the remainder of the 4th Division, 6th Corps: the 25th, 26th, 28th and 70th Line Regiments who were charged with defending the country south of St. Privat.³ The batteries of the 6th Corps were at the quarries of Amanweiler.

Though the stream of wounded and unwounded men continued to flow on the road through Marengo toward Metz and the disappearance of numerous single soldiers into the depth of the forest of Jaumont did not cease, there was no real panic in the ranks of the 6th Corps.

¹Statement of the (then) Lieutenant von Esbeck, called von Platen.

²In the village were the 4th, 12th and 93d Line Regiments; one battalion from each of the 9th and 100th Line Regiments; two battalions of the 10th Line Regiment; one half battalion of the 94th Line Regiment; the 9th Jäger Battalion; and a small detachment from the 25th Line Regiment.

³Farthest off was the 70th Line Regiment.

The broad slope, descending toward the forest of Jaumont east of the village offered the troops which had fallen back from the first line some protection against the German infantry fire and gave the leaders an opportunity to reestablish order. Of course the power of resistance of the parts which awaited the German attack in extended deployment in rear of the village ought not to be considered as very high. On the other hand in the village itself the firm determination not to let this last bulwark fall into the enemy's hands without making the utmost resistance prevailed generally, even though that determination was subsequently carried out by only a part of the defenders.

THE GERMAN LEFT WING IS CONTAINED AT RONCOURT

On the extreme left wing of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade the 3d and 4th Companies, 1st Guard Regiment, had just taken the field stone walls southwest of Roncourt and, in conjunction with the 8th Company farther south, taken up the fire against hostile skirmishers who were retreating across the ridge between Roncourt and St. Privat when Colonel von Roeder came up and ordered Lieutenant Colonel von Oppell commanding there to go farther ahead on Roncourt together with the 1st Guard Pioneer Company just coming up from the rear. This happened at a time when the Saxon batteries were keeping up a very hot fire on that village. As soon as the Grenadiers and Pioneers had ascended the declivity they saw the hostile detachments, which up to then had remained in and around Roncourt, retreating at a run in the direction of the edge of the forest of Jaumont. The group under Lieutenant Colonel von Oppell turned therefore at once against St. Privat in such manner that only the left wing touched the southwest corner of the village. When that wing attempted to descend the declivity running from Roncourt southward it received a hot cross fire from the south and east,¹ apparently also fire from Roncourt itself, so that the officers caused the men to face about to first search that village. The right wing somewhat assembled again toward the field stone walls at the roadfork southwest of Roncourt and took up the fire fight against hostile skirmishers between Roncourt and St. Privat. Lieutenant Colonel von Oppell saw troops approaching from the west and rode back to bring them up for participation in the battle. These were parts of the 3d Guard Regiment and of the Saxon Body Grenadier Regiment No. 100.

The 1st Battalion, 3d Guard Regiment, in two half-battalions and forming the extreme left wing echelon of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade, had halted for a little while at the northern edge of the large basin while the skirmish lines of the left wing moved toward Roncourt. Informed as to the situation at St. Privat by Lieutenant von Esbeck the battalion renewed its advance on Roncourt to enter the first line, when all of a sudden three companies of the Saxon 100th Body Gren-

¹From parts of the 9th and 100th Line Regiments.

dier Regiment took their place at the double time between the two half-battalions. These three companies were the right wing of its regiment and had kept the direction on Roncourt while the left wing went toward St. Privat. They were the 4th, 6th and 5th Companies. In the left rear of the 1st Battalion, 3d Foot Guard Regiment, the 1st, 2d, and 3d Companies of the Body Grenadier Regiment appeared, and, still farther to the left at some distance, the 1st Battalion, 101st Grenadier Regiment was marching on Roncourt. Through that gap other Saxon troops which had been started for St. Privat, i.e. the 3d Battalion and the 8th and 7th Companies, Body Grenadier Regiment and the 2d and 1st Battalions, 107th Infantry Regiment, pressed in an almost southerly direction past the front of the 1st Battalion, 3d Foot Guard Regiment. This caused the right wing companies of the 1st Battalion, 3d Foot Guard Regiment, the 1st and 4th under Captain von Seel, to also turn against St. Privat, without succeeding in gaining full direction toward that village. Getting farther and farther away from the other half-battalion, they got between the 8th Company and parts of the 3d and 4th Companies, 1st Foot Guard Regiment, which, intermixed with Guard Pioneers, fought at the roadfork southwest of Roncourt. Into the vicinity of the half-battalion Seel the 4th Company of the Saxon Body Grenadier Regiment also came, while the 5th and 6th Companies following up were directed by Lieutenant Colonel von Oppell toward the group fighting at the field stone walls. Farther north the 2d and 3d Companies, 3d Foot Guard Regiment, under Captain von Altrock, followed by the 1st, 2d, and 3d Companies of the 100th Body Grenadier Regiment advanced on Roncourt and, close to the village met the 1st Battalion, 101st Grenadier Regiment, which had found Roncourt unoccupied and then had taken direction toward St. Privat. The just named three companies of the Body Grenadier Regiment intended to follow it, but strong fire from the southern vicinity of Roncourt caused them to throw themselves down north of the field stone walls on the road southwest of Roncourt, prolonging the line of the Guard Grenadiers and Pioneers lying there.

By this mixing of parts of two regiments and one pioneer company at the fork of the roads there was formed a larger fighting group the right wing of which reached west of the Roncourt—St. Privat road as far as the hill with the three trees, while the left wing was crowded together at the field stone walls at the fork in the road.¹ Hostile skirmishers² fired from the rear between the two villages; strong columns were seen retreating southeast; a heavy fire fight was going on.

The commander of the 1st Battalion, 3d Guard Regiment, Major

¹At the fork in the road were, in a dense mass, under command of Lieutenant Colonel von Oppell, men of eight different companies: the 3d and 4th, 1st Guard Regiment; the 1st Guard Pioneer Company; the 1st, 2d, 3d, 5th, and 6th Companies, Body Grenadier Regiment No. 100. The left wing reached only a short piece north beyond the fork in the road, the right wing had alongside of it for a short time the 1st and 4th Companies, 3d Guard Regiment, and 4th Company, Body Grenadier Regiment No. 100.

²Of the 9th Line Regiment.

von Seegenberg, in the meantime led the half-battalion Altrock farther toward Roncourt, as it appeared to him important for the further course of the battle to occupy this place now temporarily outside of the battle zone proper. His adjutant, Second Lieutenant Beneckendorf von Hindenburg, rode ahead to the village for reconnaissance and, though the village was still under a weak shell fire of the Saxon batteries, found there a platoon of the 101st Guard Grenadier Regiment and two officers of the 3d and 4th Companies, 1st Guard Regiment, who with their men were close to the western exit of the village. When entering the village the half-battalion Von Altrock received a hot enfilading fire from the south, which caused Major von Seegenberg to order the 3d Company to occupy the south edge while the 2d Company with the groups of the 1st Guard Regiment took position in the village which was filled with French wounded, and cleared it of the last stragglers of the 9th and 75th Line Regiments. When the 3d Company spread itself out on the south edge, it saw the 1st Battalion, 101st Grenadier Regiment, falling back on the village from the south and arrived in good time to offer it a receiving position.

This latter battalion, attempting to press past the west of Roncourt toward St. Privat, had encountered the same cross fire which parts of the 3d and 4th Companies, 1st Guard Regiment had previously felt. This cross fire was supplemented by shells from two directions: from the woods at Auboué and from the southeastern vicinity of St. Privat, to which point the French batteries had retired. The officers succeeded in deploying the battalion as skirmishers, though the men were much exhausted by the long run, and in taking up the fire against the hostile infantry south and southeast of Roncourt; but only for a short time. The artillery fire, especially, induced the battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel von Leonhardi, to take his companies back to the village, where they occupied the southeast front and continued until dark the fire fight against the hostile infantry in the forest of Jaumont.

In the meantime time Prince George of Saxony had followed up the parts of the 45th Infantry Brigade, which remained on the march to Roncourt, with the 108th Rifle Regiment and had taken up a position in reserve close to the west side of the village. Almost simultaneously the 3d Battalion, 107th Infantry Regiment arrived in the northern part of the village from the right wing of the 48th Infantry Brigade. Major von Seegenberg now saw that possession of the village was secured by Saxon troops and ordered the half-battalion von Altrock to assemble in the village in order to follow up the other half-battalion to St. Privat. But this assembly took considerable time as there was an indescribable confusion in the village. Tortured by thirst the Prussian soldiers, paying no attention to the bursting French and Saxon shells, crowded around the wells and pumps and around the numerous water carriers of all Saxon organizations which had come up. Only toward 8 p.m. did the half-battalion Von Altrock, which had been

joined by parts of the 1st Guard Regiment which had reached Roncourt, arrive in the vicinity of the roadfork southwest of Roncourt and join the companies fighting there under command of Lieutenant Colonel von Oppell. These troops were not fortunate enough to participate in the assault on St. Privat as at the same time a hot fight had taken place southeast of Roncourt which had appeared to seriously threaten the German left wing and had chained down the German forces fighting in and around Roncourt. When the 2d and 3d Companies, 3d Guard Regiment left Roncourt in a westerly direction the troops farther off thought that the French had again entered the village.¹

THE FIGHT AT RONCOURT

Those battalions of the 48th Infantry Brigade which had remained on the march to Roncourt² had received just as little fire from there as had the 45th Infantry Brigade when they approached the village. In the northeastern vicinity of Roncourt hostile cavalry had appeared, causing the nearest companies of the 106th and 107th Infantry Regiments to form temporarily dense groups. A few rounds from the Saxon artillery at Montois la Montagne chased away the French troopers.³ The companies of the 107th Infantry Regiment arriving first—the 9th, 10th and 11th—first slaked their thirst at the village pumps and wells and attempted then to leave the village on the south. Though they were successful in driving back a detachment of the 100th Line Regiment⁴ hugging the ground near the southeast corner of the village, a further advance came to naught in consequence of the hostile cross fire—the same thing having happened to all preceding detachments. Like the 12th Company following, the three companies had to throw themselves down at the village exit toward Pierrevillers and content themselves with occupying the southeastern village edge.

Of the 106th Infantry Regiment advancing farther east, the 9th, 10th and 11th Companies had in the meantime arrived at the apparently unoccupied Malancourt. Only three men were found there and according to their statements the village had been occupied by a detachment of the 100th Line Regiment. The three companies drank water and rested until new orders to advance reached them at 7.30 p.m.⁵

The 1st Battalion, same regiment, which was joined on the left by the 12th Company, under leadership of Colonel von Abendroth, had advanced from the northeast projecting corner of the small woods between Montois la Montagne and Roncourt, in the direction of the forest edge southeast of Roncourt, which had been perceived to be the objective of the hostile retrograde movements from the village. The

¹ Shortly before the assault on St. Privat, the commander of the 1st Guard Regiment, Colonel von Roeder, fell near the group under Lieutenant Colonel von Oppell.

² All, except the 1st and 2d, 107th Infantry Regiment.

³ Royal Saxon War Archives.

⁴ Advanced from the defensive flank formed east of St. Privat.

⁵ Royal Saxon War Archives.

infantry was followed by the temporarily organized brigade of the 12th Cavalry Division with its horse battery, to be ready in case of a chance for pursuit, as the general impression had gained ground that the French were in full retreat eastward from Roncourt and St. Privat. The brigade, however, only got as far as the hill north of Roncourt, receiving there such a hot fire from the edge of the forest that it had to be taken back to the covered low ground south of the just mentioned small woods, while its horse battery took a new position farther north, not far from that of the 2d Heavy Battery, to fire on the enemy at the edge of the woods. During these events orders from the brigade commander reached Colonel von Abendroth, who had arrived with his five companies in front of Roncourt, directing everything to turn against St. Privat. Though a serious enfilading fire came from the quarries at Jaumont and the neighboring forest edges, the colonel attempted to move around the northeast corner of Roncourt and gain the new direction.

This movement was found impossible of execution and the companies were forced to make front against the enemy in the east and southeast, suffering material losses in a short time. The enemy appeared to have superior forces and under this supposition Colonel von Abendroth declined to follow the suggestion of Captain von Treitschke, of the general staff of the 23d Infantry Division, to chase off the enemy by a quick attack in the interest of the corps artillery turning against Roncourt, and instead called up reinforcements. When the companies of the 106th Infantry Regiment appeared east of Roncourt, the 3d Battalion, 107th Infantry Regiment was just making a renewed attempt to advance from the southeast corner of the village on the stone structure 500 meters southeast of Roncourt. For this purpose it could utilize only three companies, as the 9th Company had not yet been completely assembled since the last attempt. The advance by rushes of the battalion was joined on the left wing by the right wing of the 106th Infantry Regiment, causing a mixing of both regiments. The 1st Battalion, 101st Regiment, which still was in the southeastern part of the village, and the troops assembled at the roadfork southwest of Roncourt, poured a hot fire on the enemy who still held the terrain between Roncourt and St. Privat. Success did not fail to materialize and the parts of the hostile infantry which had fought at the just mentioned stone structure facing toward Roncourt gave way more and more to the pressure coming from the north¹ and fell back on St. Privat. All troops farther east fell back partly toward the east edge of the forest of Jaumont and partly to the south.² The fire from the east edge of the Jaumont forest increased so much that the 3d Battalion, 107th Infantry Regiment also took station on the right of the companies of the 106th Regiment. The quarries of Jaumont and the forest edge southwest of them were occupied by a long line of hostile skir-

¹2d Battalion, 9th Line Regiment.

²Parts of the 1st Battalion, 9th Line Regiment, of the 100th Line Regiment, and of the 2d Regiment *Chasseurs d'Afrique*.

mishers, who partly utilized for cover the embankment of the road running immediately along the forest. The 9th Company, 107th Infantry Regiment, until then back in Roncourt, now came up. The parts of both regiments in the first line then rose up and charged against the forest edge and quarries. The road embankment was captured and the forest entered. An effective pursuit of the enemy who retreated into the forest was not made on account of increasing darkness and the dense underbrush, and especially because the enemy in the quarries still kept up his resistance for some time. Only parts of the 9th, 10th, and 11th Companies, 107th Infantry Regiment, traversed the forest and reached the vicinity of Bronvaux, which was found occupied by the enemy.

In the meantime reinforcements had come up, but too late for participation. Captain von Treitschke brought up the 13th Jäger Battalion. The three companies of the 3d Battalion, 106th Infantry Regiment which had rested in Malancourt appeared at the quarries there to join the 1st Battalion. The commander of the 12th Cavalry Division, General Count zu Lippe, had sent them orders to advance against the southern edges of the forest when his regiments came under fire on the hill north of Roncourt.

Of the infantry brigades of the XIIth Army Corps in rear, the 46th had been brought up, by orders of the division commander, Prince George of Saxony, from the west edge of the woods of Auboué in the direction of Roncourt. Arrived at that village, it received orders from the Prince to send one battalion to support the 48th Infantry Brigade, the rest to take direction on St. Privat. Neither this detached battalion—3d, 103d Infantry Regiment—nor the rest of the brigade came into contact with the enemy. The former passed Roncourt on the north and halted behind the fighting line at the forest of Jaumont; the latter arrived at the north front of St. Privat at a time when the village had been captured and it also turned its front against the forest of Jaumont.

The batteries in rear followed up the advance of the infantry. The 1st Horse and 2d Heavy Batteries advanced from near the small woods north of Roncourt as far as the road from Roncourt to Pierrevillers and took an active part in the battle at the edge of the Jaumont forest. The 1st Heavy Battery, which had been attached to the 46th Infantry Brigade, entered the battle position of the Saxon artillery in front of St. Privat shortly before 8 p.m. but could fire only eight shells on the village as the fire was discontinued when the assault commenced.

The 47th Infantry Brigade, which stood as last reserve at the south edge of the woods at Auboué, was brought up in the evening to Roncourt. These movements lasted until toward 9 p.m. About the same time the last shots were fired at the edge of the Jaumont forest. Though the fire fight had originally been exceedingly hot the participating French battalions suffered comparatively little loss as they by

no means allowed the Saxon infantry to get within effective range. On the other hand the losses among the Saxon infantry were very material, especially in the 1st Battalion, 106th Infantry regiment, and in the 3d Battalion, 107th Infantry Regiment.

THE SITUATION IN ST. PRIVAT LA MONTAGNE SHORTLY
BEFORE THE ASSAULT

After the 2d Battalion, 9th Line Regiment had retired from the southern vicinity of Roncourt on St. Privat, the north front of the village was open for attack. Though farther east the space between the village and the forest of Jaumont were still held by parts of the 100th Line Regiment and, in connection with them, the edge of the forest and the quarries of Jaumont, there was, because of the weakness of these troops and their being partly chained down by German forces at Roncourt, no possibility of flanking the attack against St. Privat from the north by an attack from the east. St. Privat now could be attacked from three sides: from the west, south and north. In the village itself, which for some time before the assault had been under the fire of Prussian and Saxon batteries and was burning in places, the number of defenders had materially decreased. From the north front two battalions of the 10th and three of the 93d Line Regiments had marched off to the rear; those of the 10th Line Regiment started the retreat through Marengo with the 2d Battalion already east of the village. The shortage of ammunition had a great deal to do with this. At the commencement of the assault there were still in St. Privat ten and one half battalions,¹ in addition to numerous individuals dispersed but eager for battle. In a building at the southwest corner, prepared for defense, were the 9th Jäger Battalion and parts of the 25th Line Regiment which also occupied a trench connecting that building with the projecting field stone walls on the west front. Northward three companies of the 94th Line Regiment and the riflemen of the 12th Line Regiment connected. The northern wing of the west front was formed by a skirmish trench leading from the field stone walls of the west front to those of the north front. Behind this first line were, in the buildings on the west front, other parts of the 12th Line Regiment, which occupied the windows, attics, and hastily prepared loopholes. On the north front stood the 3d and 2d Battalions, 9th Line Regiment, and farther east, behind field stone walls on the road to Jaumont, was the 3d Battalion, 100th Line Regiment, which connected with the forces still holding out at the forest of Jaumont. Men of the 4th Line Regiment were distributed for reinforcing the firing line along the west as well as north front. The exit of the village toward Roncourt was especially strongly held; west and east of it were two pieces of ground admirably suited for defense, a churchyard surrounded by high stone walls, and a vegetable garden inside of

¹Inclusive of the 2d Battalion, 9th Line Regiment, which had come back from the vicinity of Roncourt.

which a massive two story building was under construction. The churchyard on the northwest corner within a large quadrangle enclosed by stone walls and skirmish trenches formed a sort of redoubt.

While the west and north fronts of the village were admirably suited for a stubborn defense the extended and open south front, having but scattered buildings, offered far less difficulties to the attackers and here as a matter of fact the first German troops entered.

The garrison of the village was so shaken by the effect of the German artillery fire and the destruction of the late protective cover, that only a part of it awaited the decision proper within the village. When the Germans pressed into the village the number of defenders was very scarce at some points, a large proportion of the troops having evacuated the village during the assault and gone eastward.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE ASSAULT ON ST. PRIVAT LA MONTAGNE

The events at Roncourt, the occupation of that village and the formation of the fighting group under Lieutenant Colonel von Oppell at the roadfork southwest of the village relieved those parts of the 2d Battalion, 1st Guard Regiment, the 8th Company, and the group Brause,¹ fighting on the hill north of the large basin, from any danger from the north. When the last defenders of the ridge between Roncourt and St. Privat² gradually fell back on the latter place both fighting groups, behind which the 4th Foot Guard Regiment appeared on both sides of the large basin, increased their fire and directed it on hostile detachments appearing at the north edge of St. Privat. The impression obtained that the French, who had renewed the fight all along the line to cover the retreat, were preparing for a counter attack at that point. Such a counter attack did not happen, but the fire fight between the Germans on the hill with the three trees and the French at the northern edge became hotter and hotter and very costly to the Germans, who in the meantime had turned their entire front against St. Privat. The 4th Company, Saxon 100th Body Grenadier Regiment, and the 1st and 4th Companies, 3d Foot Guard Regiment, took part in this fight. These companies, engaged in the movement on St. Privat, had inserted themselves between the 8th Company, 1st Guard Regiment, and the fighting group under Von Oppell. While the Saxon company threw itself down alongside the 8th Company the two companies of the Guard regiment advanced to the bend in the Roncourt—St. Privat road, using for this advance the favorable moment when the hostile skirmishers south of Roncourt were kept busy by the advance of the 1st Battalion, 101st Grenadier Regiment to beyond Roncourt. From that bend in the road skirmishers were sent ahead along the road to St. Privat against the field stone walls at the north side of the village, as soon as the ridge between Roncourt and St. Privat was evacuated by the enemy.

¹Lieutenant Brause's group consisted of parts of the 5th and 6th Companies.

²2d Battalion, 9th Line Regiment.

The 4th Guard Regiment had remained continuously on the march from Ste. Marie to the battle position of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade, which march only the 2d Battalion interrupted for a short time by orders from corps headquarters.¹ The 1st Battalion, which reached with its 4th Company the center of the large basin, with the other three the first line farther south, advanced by rushes against the northwest side of the village, having gradually deployed all its platoons under the effect of the hostile fire. The remnants of the Fusilier Battalion, 1st Guard Regiment, under the last unwounded officer, joined this advance, as did also what was left of the 1st and 2d Companies, which with the Fusilier Battalion had been engaged in the battle south of the large basin. The group under Lieutenant von Arnim, consisting of parts of the 5th and 6th Companies, was kept back at the south edge of the large basin as last closed echelon.

The Fusilier Battalion, 4th Foot Guard Regiment, striving north of the large basin to reach the first line on the hill with the three trees, had observed that the hostile forces in position there turned their front more and more toward St. Privat. In consequence it also turned that way and inserted its 9th and 12th Companies between the 4th of its own regiment in the large basin and the skirmishers of the 1st and 4th Companies, 3d Guard Regiment which were advancing along the road from Roncourt to St. Privat. In this movement the 12th Company absorbed the group under Lieutenant von Brause. The 11th and 10th Companies for the present halted behind the 8th Company, 1st Guard Regiment, on the hill with the three trees.

The commander of the 4th Guard Regiment, Lieutenant Colonel vont Wolffrad² saw the rapidly augmenting losses caused by the hostile fire among the deployed companies of the 1st Battalion and sent orders to the 2d Battalion to reinforce the 1st. The battalion lying behind the group von Arnim rose up and the 8th, 7th, and 6th Companies ran forward along the south edge of the large basin and arrived in a gap between the 3d and 4th Companies when these were still 250 meters from the first field stone walls defended by the French. The 5th Company under Captain von Esebeck followed the right wing of the 1st Battalion in the direction of the northwest corner of the village.

The hot enfilading fire directed on the northwest corner of the village had already caused the opponent to evacuate the first field stone walls and other cover and draw back on the village edge proper. Through the interference of the 2d Battalion the attack on the left wing was carried nearly to the just abandoned position but came to a halt there under the fire from the edge of the village. Here the left wing toward the east reached only as far as the Roncourt—St. Privat road.

¹ These orders did not reach all parts of the 2d Battalion. The view obtained in the 4th Guard Regiment that they were to await the effect of the artillery against St. Privat and then advance conjointly with the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade to the attack. The artillery effect commenced during the forward movement of the regiment. — *War Archives*.

² He was already severely wounded, but did not relinquish command. He died of his wound a few days after the battle.

Strong enfilading fire came from the northeastern vicinity of the village so that at present no success was had in an attempt to turn against the eastern sector of the north front of the village.

This was the last moment before the assault. On a large arc open toward the north, the Guard infantry surrounded the village, its wings closer than the center to the attack objective. Almost everything inserted against St. Privat was deployed in the first line or—as in the 4th Guard Regiment—close behind as supporting troops. The right wing, on hill 328 and on the Ste. Marie—St. Privat road, was formed by troops of the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade, whose other troops were fighting farther south against the French 4th Corps; toward the north the 2d and the rest of the 3d Guard Regiment were in connection; the northwest corner was attacked by the 1st and 4th Guard Regiment, badly mixed. Farther in rear some groups only were in the vicinity of the large basin: those under Lieutenant von Arnim in the large basin; the 8th Company 1st Guard Regiment, on the hill with the three trees; with it the 10th and 11th Companies, 4th Guard Regiment; and on the Roncourt—St. Privat road the 1st and 4th Companies, 3d Guard Regiment which had reached a favorable firing position there. Any troops farther north were held down by the fight at Roncourt. Progress had been made against the southwest corner in the same way as against the northwest corner; the Regiment Franz along the Ste. Marie—St. Privat road had drawn closer to the enemy occupying the edge. Lieutenant von Esbeck, called von Platen, had here also spread the information on the right wing and at the south of the road that the Saxons were approaching. As a matter of fact their columns, in two groups, now became visible behind the lines of the left wing. The east group, consisting of the 3d Battalion, 100th Body Grenadier Regiment, the 2d and 1st Battalions, 107th Infantry Regiment, and the 7th and 8th Companies of the first named regiment, advanced in column of battalions behind each other west of the Roncourt—St. Privat road toward the left wing of the 4th Guard Regiment; farther right, at some distance, the 2d and 3d Battalions, 101st Grenadier Regiment, in eight columns of companies alongside each other, under General von Craushaar, hastened toward the right wing of the 4th Guard Regiment. Still more forces were coming up. On both sides of the Ste. Marie—St. Privat road the Guard Fusilier Regiment was advancing. The 20th Infantry Division was marching from St. Ail toward the road.

From the hill southeast of St. Ail General von Voigts-Rhetz had overlooked the battle of the Guard Corps and had arrived at the independent decision to lead his forces through St. Ail to the Guard Corps. The artillery had started the advance toward 6.30 p.m. at the trot, to enter the positions of the Guard artillery. Shortly after the 20th Infantry Division had started in the direction of the Ste. Marie—St. Privat road, while the 19th Infantry Division and the 5th Cavalry Division had followed up to St. Ail, taking a position in readiness there.

The approach of strong reserves from all sides indicated an imminent decision. But nothing pointed to this more clearly than the suc-

cessful effect of the artillery; the flames arising from the village of St. Privat gave the signal for the attack and the spur for the final assault.

In the course of the afternoon St. Privat had repeatedly been fired on by the artillery. Even before the attack of the Guard the Guard artillery fired shells into the village from time to time. Shortly after 6 p.m. the 3d and 4th Heavy Guard Batteries, in position at the foot of the ridge southwest of St. Privat, turned their fire occasionally on the south front of the village. Other batteries also fired against that point. Though the crowded masses in the village might find this fire very annoying, no effect could be perceived from the outside. There was an absence of unity in the artillery leading and action. Toward 7 p.m. the adjutant of General von Pape, Major Count zu Ysenburg, arrived at the corps artillery of the Guard Corps in position at the projecting hill southwest of St. Privat and brought orders from his commanding general, couched in very direct terms, that the fire was to be directed on the village.

The batteries of the 2d Guard Infantry Division, in position on the Ste. Marie—St. Privat road, simultaneously received orders from their division commander, General von Budritzki, to set St. Privat afire. In consequence nine batteries of the left wing of the Guard artillery now directed their fire on the village, while the right wing south of the ridge 328—321 continued its battle with the 4th French Corps.¹ Two horse batteries of the Xth Army Corps entered the firing line of the left wing, using the gap between the 1st Horse and 4th Light Guard Batteries; the foot artillery battalions followed later, as the field, entirely covered with troops, left no space for further artillery deployments. At 7.15 p.m. sixty-six Prussian guns fired on the south and west edge as well as on the interior of St. Privat. The results of this enveloping fire were soon perceptible. The hostile infantry fire soon decreased; here and there thick smoke was seen, caused by the shells. The eleven Prussian batteries were soon joined by fourteen Saxon batteries which turned from their previous positions south of the east projecting corner of the woods of Auboué and south of Montois la Montagne against St. Privat.

When Crown Prince Albert, who followed the course of events from Roncourt, observed that his infantry in part proceeded toward St. Privat, after Roncourt was in the hands of the Germans, he directed his artillery to turn against St. Privat. This renewed change of position was made under great difficulties. The batteries south of the woods of Auboué had not yet fully deployed in their position when it became necessary to again limber up. The movement stopped, being hampered by infantry. From the north some few batteries came up and crowded into the newly gained firing position. By the time that was fully brought into order all the batteries were in position. St. Privat was in the hands of the Germans. The new Saxon artillery line

¹ The following batteries fired from the left wing on the road on St. Privat:—6th Heavy, 5th Heavy, 6th Light, 4th Light, 1st Horse, 3d Horse, 2d Horse, 3d Heavy, 4th Heavy; on the French 4th Corps:—3d Light, 2d Heavy, 1st Heavy, 1st Light, 2d Light.

touched the southwest corner of Roncourt with its left wing; with its right it was a few hundred meters north of the St. Privat—Ste. Marie road. The line included all Saxon batteries, except the 1st Horse and the 2d Light which interfered in the vicinity east of Roncourt in the fight at the forest of Jaumont.¹

The Prussian and Saxon Batteries fired on the village at ranges of from 800 to 1600 meters.

Finally the foot artillery battalions of the Xth Army Corps entered the gaps in the German artillery front which now extended north of the Bois de la Cusse over the entire space to Roncourt. The 3d Battalion took position south of the road between the 3d Light and 4th Heavy Guard Batteries and directed its fire on the numerous French batteries, the flashes of whose guns could be seen at the quarries of Amanweiler. The 2d Battalion took position north of the road in the space which the Saxon artillery had left free, masking those batteries in part, and participated in the bombardment of St. Privat, after having fired already a few rounds from a position farther in rear at Ste. Marie.² Only shortly before 8 p.m. did the 1st Battalion, Foot Artillery, of the 19th Infantry Division which had been kept with it at St. Ail in readiness, arrive and attempt to gain a place in line. It was enabled to fire a few shots against the French artillery at the quarries of Amanweiler and on hostile infantry east of Amanweiler.

THE ASSAULT ON ST. PRIVAT LA MONTAGNE

The shells struck St. Privat from the north, west and south; masses of defenders fled back on the road through Jerusalem; bright flames shot up from the southwest corner and from several buildings in the north part of the village.

It was now 7.30 p.m.; darkness commenced to fall. At this time there started in parts of the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade lying in groups on hill 328, 150 to 300 meters from the edge, movements which enveloped the southwest corner of St. Privat. It is not known whether it was due to Lieutenant von Esbeck informing them that the Saxons were approaching, or whether the destruction of the thus far stubbornly defended nearest buildings by the artillery was instrumental, or whether both of these factors together, but the desire again sprung up to get ahead. Suddenly the Grenadiers and Fusiliers of the Regiments Königin and Franz rose up; first one, then more, then all who still had life and power in them; drums beat and bugles sounded, and with loud hurrahs the south front of the village was entered. The enemy offered but little resistance; a few Frenchmen,

¹The Saxon batteries counted from the left wing, stood in following sequence: 1st Light, 4th Heavy, 8th Heavy, 7th Heavy, 2d Light, 5th Heavy, 5th Light, 6th Light, 2d Horse, 6th Heavy, 1st Heavy, 4th Light, 3d Light, 3d Heavy. The 1st Heavy had come up from Moineville.

²These shots had been directed on the Guard Horse Batteries, which had advanced during the assault to the hill south of St. Privat and were believed to be hostile batteries. The general staff officer of the 1st Guard Infantry Division, Captain von Holleben, who just then brought the Guard Fusilier Regiment from Ste. Marie to the front, showed that error to the artillery.—Posthumous Papers of General von Pape.

continuing the fight to the last moment, were bayoneted down. On the right wing the 7th and 8th Companies, Regiment Königin, entered the part of the village called Jerusalem; farther west the Fusilier Battalion of the same regiment and the 9th and 12th Companies, Regiment Franz, entered the buildings between Jerusalem and the southwest corner.

The timely occupation of the road leading through St. Privat became of importance to cut off the retreat to those parts of the enemy that, frightened by the assault progressing farther to the left, were endeavoring to leave the village. The remnants of the Regiment Franz on and south of the road—little more than the strength of two companies—did not lose a moment's time in charging against the village when they saw the forward movement on their right. They captured the southwest corner and with some other detachments at once ran as far as the east side and occupied the exit toward Marengo.

Almost simultaneously with the parts of the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade, the regiments of the 1st Guard Infantry Division started for the final rush. The impulse to this came partly from the right, partly from within; the higher leaders also, Generals von Pape and von Kessel, and the few remaining officers participated in the glory of this.

At 7.30 p.m. General von Pape was on the road between Ste. Marie and St. Privat. He saw the favorable effect of the artillery on the village and saw the Guard Fusilier Regiment coming from Ste. Marie and the columns of the Saxons from Roncourt and the woods of Auboué. When these had about reached the line of the left wing, he decided that the assault might now be well undertaken, even without inserting the Guard Fusilier Regiment. He ordered that regiment—which was deployed in column of companies and advanced, with the 1st Battalion south of, with the others north of the road from Ste. Marie—to take up a receiving position for the division¹ about halfway between the villages, and himself went to the firing line north of the road about where, opposite the northwest corner of St. Privat, the left wing of the 2d Guard Regiment lay between remnants of the 3d and 1st Guard Regiments behind the right wing of the 4th Guard Regiment—about 600 meters from the village. While the 4th Guard Regiment made its assault movement by rushes, the general shouted to the nearest skirmish groups and had a trumpeter sound the charge.² From the piles of dead in the long and stubbornly defended position the few remaining men arose. The remnants of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade and the 2d Guard Regiment, one carrying forward the next, hastened up to the foremost field stone walls on the west edge of the village. Thus the assault was in progress along the entire attacking front; for on the extreme left wing opposite the north front the approach of the eastern Saxon group³ had carried forward the attack movement which had stopped.

¹ War Archives.

² Posthumous papers of General von Pape.

³ 3d Battalion, 100th Body Grenadier Regiment, 1st and 2d Battalions, 107th Infantry Regiment, 7th and 8th Companies, 100th Body Grenadier Regiment.

Not far from the place where General von Pape gave the signal for the assault was General von Kessel with the debris of his brigade, which were mixed with the 1st Battalion, 2d Guard Regiment.¹ He gathered together the nearest groups of skirmishers and led them against the west side of the village, leaving the northwest corner to the 4th Guard Regiment. While the men scaled the walls, which in some places were very high, and drove back the last resistance, the general rode with his orderly officer, Lieutenant Count von Pfeil, through a breach north of the road into the village. Farther south, three companies of the 2d Battalion, 2d Guard Regiment and the Fusilier Battalion on and alongside of the road, mixed with men of the 5th Company and the Regiment Franz, charged into the village. The 10th Company cleared the enemy from the houses at the road entrance, the others pressed through to the east side gate and took many prisoners as the retreat to Marengo had been blocked by the 4th Guard Infantry Brigade. Stubborn resistance was encountered only near the church, where the road branches off to the southwest; here hand to hand fights ensued, in which later on parts of the 4th Guard Regiment and Saxons interfered. On the whole the west part and the south part of the village were taken without much difficulty. The assaulters were enabled to cover the long distance to the edge of the village within one rush and without suffering material loss.

All those who had pressed through the village at the first rush to the east side used their rifles to fire on the dense fleeing masses of the French pressing back on and alongside of the road to Marengo.

Immensely more difficult was the assault against the northwest corner and the north front of the village where the 4th Guard Regiment, mixed with parts of the 1st Guard Regiment² and the Saxons fought. When the 2d Battalion, 4th Guard Regiment was inserted in the line of the 1st Battalion by Lieutenant Colonel von Wolfradt, the 5th Company, separating from the rest, gained the extreme right wing of the regiment. This was the moment when the attack movement came to a standstill. As the fire fight appeared to him useless, the company commander, Captain von Esebeck, who was the first again to take up the charge, led his men against a stone wall near the northwest corner of the village and which was pierced by a gate. With the help of men from other companies, also men from the 1st, 2d and 3d Guard Regiments, the hostile resistance in the gardens on the west front along the road leading to Roncourt was overcome and the nearest houses occupied. Numerous prisoners were taken.

Though the charge was successful here, although under heavy losses, the assault made a few moments later by the eastern Saxon group against the north front came to naught under the enormous fire of the defender of the village exit leading toward Roncourt and the

¹Mainly of the 7th Company of the 1st and the 2d Battalion, 3d Guard Grenadier Regiment.

²Mainly of the 1st, 2d, 5th, and 6th Companies (group Brause) and the Fusilier Battalion.

enfilading fire coming from the vicinity northeast of St. Privat. The 3d Battalion, 100th Body Grenadier Regiment, the 1st and 2d Battalions, 107th Infantry Regiment, behind them the 7th and 8th Companies, 100th Body Grenadier Regiment, which the 4th Company had followed from the hill with the three trees, had crossed the large basin not far west of the road from Roncourt to St. Privat and, closing together in dense masses in the confined space,¹ had arrived behind the left wing of the 4th Guard Regiment, which had just halted in front of the foremost field stone wall. Unable to deploy—only the 2d Battalion, 107th Infantry Regiment had been able to form two lines—with but few skirmishers in front, the Saxons crossed the line of the Guards and charged against the northern exit of the village. It appeared as if the French had been waiting for this favorable moment to increase their fire to the utmost intensity. The bullets cut wide swaths in the dense columns. The commander of the 107th Infantry Regiment, Lieutenant von Schweidnitz, and all battalion commanders, were disabled. The attempts of the battalions to now deploy and send skirmishers ahead miscarried as did the endeavors to continue the advance. Deprived of a large part of their officers and fighting power the battalions retreated to and back of the line of the 4th Guard Regiment, where they had to be assembled and order again established.²

This success of the French fire appeared to revive in a high degree the courage of the defenders of the north front. East of the road to Roncourt masses of skirmishers left the edge of the village; farther west a few more brave ones let themselves down over the surrounding wall of the village. But no counter attack was made; that was prevented in its incipency by the fire of the Germans and by the again resumed forward movement of the 4th Foot Guard Regiment. While the 8th Company, 1st Foot Guard Regiment fired from the hill with the three trees, and the 1st and 4th Companies of the 3d Foot Guard Regiment from their location on the Roncourt—St. Privat road, on everything which showed itself in front of the walls, on the left wing the 12th, 9th, 4th, 8th, 7th and 6th Companies, mixed with men of the former group Brause of the 1st Guard Regiment, pressed closer to the northern entrance of the village. In this charge the 12th Company, giving way to a pressure coming from the west, crossed with two platoons the Roncourt—St. Privat road. Behind the left wing the 10th and 11th Companies, 4th Foot Guard Regiment, followed up from the hill with the three trees, their skirmishers already being on the line of the other two Fusilier companies.

The reassembled Saxon troops joined this forward movement, partly entering the line of the left wing of the 4th Foot Guard Regiment and mixing with it, partly prolonging the line to the east.

¹From the right: 3d Battalion, Body Grenadier Regiment, the 1st and 2d Battalion, 107th Infantry Regiment; the other companies were still behind.

²The skirmishers of the 1st and 4th Companies, 3d Foot Guard Regiment also became involved in the retrograde movement on the Roncourt—St. Privat road. The decided attitude of the parts of these companies still in rear brought the fleeing men again to a stand.

Farthest west the 3d Battalion, 100th Body Grenadier Regiment advanced with three companies, its 12th Company, having become separated in the movement to the rear, now following in reserve; on the left the 7th, 8th and 4th Companies, same regiment, connected; on the road from Roncourt to St. Privat the 1st and 2d Battalions, 107th Infantry Regiment again entered the fight. In front of the extreme left wing were three low parallel field stone walls, the third one forming the village edge proper. They indicated the natural limits of the last rushes before the assault and offered some protection against the fire from the village.

In the meantime behind the right wing of the 4th Guard Regiment the west group of the Saxons had appeared. This was composed of the 2d and 3d Battalions, 101st Grenadier Regiment, in company columns alongside each other, under General von Craushaar.¹ The general had ridden ahead and gone to the 3d Battalion, 100th Body Grenadier Regiment which he saw charging against the north front of the village. He arrived there when this and the other two battalions of the 107th Infantry Regiment were retreating after their charge in mass. After he had worked to reestablish order and with sword in hand shown the troops again the road to take, he rode back to the right wing. On the way, mortally wounded, he fell from his horse. Of the two battalions he had brought up, the 3d, 101st Grenadier Regiment, reached the fighting line first and, exhausted from the run, threw itself down. A little later the 2d Battalion arrived on its right and gave an impulse for the continuation of the charge. Farther to the right the attack against the west front was in full swing. The attack objective of the two Saxon battalions was now the northwest corner. Mixed with them the 1st, 2d and 3d Companies, 4th Guard Regiment, advanced.

The closer the assaulters approached their objective the more the troops crowded together and into one another. Finally the troops attacking the northwest corner and the north front became an indistinguishable mixture of Prussians and Saxons and the confusion was so pronounced that men appeared at points away from their organizations where they were hardly expected to be according to the original march direction. At many points an indescribable crowding took place which the officers vainly sought to prevent; the skirmish lines changed into dense masses behind one another; and in addition powder smoke and dusk prevented any supervision. The attack against the northwest corner and the north front offered an entirely different picture from that on the west and south front. On the one south thin skirmish groups with large intervals, dispersed and without cohesion; on the north dense masses, far too many troops in a confined space. No wonder that the stubborn defender of the northern part of the village, in spite of his poor marksmanship at short range, was able to cause the attacker serious losses, and that, because of the general confusion it

¹ From right to left: 6th, 7th, 5th, 8th;—12th, 11th, 9th, 10th Companies.

could not be helped that German detachments fired on other Germans. Repeatedly the command "Order arms!" had to be given to silence the fire of the rear lines.

On the right wing of the 4th Guard Regiment, the 1st, 2d and 3d Companies, together with the two battalions of the 101st Grenadier Regiment, forced their way into the quadrangle on the northwest corner formed by the field stone walls and trenches. The heavy hostile fire from the redoubt-like churchyard and the houses at the exit to Roncourt precluded a further advance. Farther east parts of the left wing gained the center one of the field stone walls in front of the northern entrance. After a slight fire preparation success was had here—though at the cost of much time and the sacrifice of many lives—in gaining the third field stone wall, the village wall proper, and in forcing back the defenders. At first it was a thin line, formed from men of the 4th Guard Regiment and the two Saxon Grenadier Regiments, which gained a foothold in the village; gradually that line was filled up, in spite of heavy losses, to a dense group of skirmishers.

The edge of the village was now reached; but not yet the northern entrance proper which was formed, a little farther south on the western side, by the highwalled churchyard, on the east side by a garden with a newly erected building. Against that entrance repeated attacks were made by the dense mass of the Prussian and Saxon infantry but failed under heavy loss. A number of men succeeded in holding their foothold in the dead angle of the wall of the churchyard. A Saxon shell pierced one of the walls and the opening was enlarged by hand. Then the attackers pointed their rifles through it and killed the defenders—about 25 in number. In spite of this success it was still impossible to enter the village as long as the neighboring new building was in the enemy's hands. One part of the 4th Foot Guard Regiment under Captains von Kunowski and von Krosigk—about 300 men—therefore moved south to a point where the 5th Company under Captain von Esebeck had entered the village, and attempted to take possession of the nearest houses on the road leading toward Roncourt. Saxon soldiers of the 11th and 12th Companies, 101st Grenadier Regiment, under Captain von Rouvroy and of the 3d Battalion, Body Grenadier Regiment now pressed around the walls of the churchyard, seeking protection under these walls not only against the hostile fire from the neighboring new building, but also against the fire of their own artillery, the effect of which had become the more annoying the closer the village was approached. Three shells had so far struck in rapid succession in the ranks of the Saxons. The fire intended for the enemy became a serious obstacle to progress. Close to the village edge stood masses of the attacker. Some detachments had to be taken back to a less exposed place. All attempts to make the batteries stop firing failed.

Before the assault on Ste. Marie Colonel von Erckert had caused the artillery to be notified that he intended to assault. This was not done

prior to the assault on St. Privat because of an absence of concerted action, and the artillery groups directing their fire on the village remained ignorant that the final assault was taking place. They fired on St. Privat, knowing the range, but any effect, other than the setting of buildings afire, could not be perceived because of the dense powder smoke and the falling dusk, and the movements of their own infantry could not be seen. The Saxon artillery and the 2d Battalion, Foot Artillery, Xth Army Corps, especially, caused havoc among the attackers with their shells while the remaining Prussian batteries again changed position to the front and found new targets. Thanks to General von Kessel the annoying artillery fire was finally brought to an end. His attention had been called to the fire by officers of the 4th Guard Regiment within the village and he sent off several mounted officers to the artillery.¹

While the assault on the northwest corner made but slow progress the southern part of the village was almost completely in German hands. On the west side of the road leading from the north to the southwest all houses had been taken, the southwest corner, Jerusalem, and the east edge were occupied by German troops. Stubborn resistance was encountered only in the school building, close to the new building at the north entrance, and in some few houses on the east side of the churchyard. Farther toward the east edge some buildings were still occupied, but their defenders kept quiet. The school building was taken by the grenadiers of the 4th Foot Guard Regiment, who had entered from the west under Captain von Kunowski; the opponent in the church square was overpowered by the numerous detachments converging to that point. Thereafter support could be brought to the comrades coming from the north. The houses close to the new building were occupied by sharpshooters and a hot fire directed on the defenders, whose fighting power gradually gave out. From the rear a detachment of the 4th Foot Guard Regiment stormed against the new building while at the same time the attack was again taken up from the north. Saxons and Prussians scaled the walls of this last French bulwark, and not a single one of the desperately fighting defenders remained alive.

As soon as the north entrance became clear a disorderly stream of Prussian and Saxon soldiers broke through the village and increased the already existing confusion to the utmost. One part found an entrance east of the new building and pressed toward the northeastern exit, mingling there with numerous men who had overcome the last resistance in the church square. Here were taken many prisoners whose retreat had been cut off. The entire east front of the village was filled with sharpshooters who from behind the walls and hedges kept up an effective rapid fire on the retreating Frenchmen hastening toward the forest of Jaumont. Another part traversed the village southward. Here and there in a few buildings some resistance was still

¹Recollections of General von Kessel.

offered by the enemy. The battle and the firing continued into the night, while the burning buildings, especially the church and the farm called Jerusalem, lighted up the village with their flames. To increase the horrors of the situation the French artillery from the quarries at Amanweiler opened a hot fire on the village as soon as they ascertained that it was in the hands of the Germans. The flash of the guns was plainly seen, then the white clouds of the bursting shrapnel against the dim heavens, and the flare of the bursting shells.¹ But little thought was given to what happened far off, especially as the artillery fire effect was immaterial. Where the battle had died down prisoners were collected, the fire extinguished, and the signals sounded for assembly. General von Pape had ridden behind the assaulting troops on the road into the village and convinced himself of the fact of capture. His main endeavor now was to care for a regulation occupation of the east front and to assemble the completely dispersed troops. Both things proved nearly impossible; the assembled groups again became dissolved in the pressure on the village roads and did not remain in the hands of the leaders. The occupation of the east front appeared very important for the reason that, when entering the village, the general had seen a hostile brigade in close order in front of the forest of Jaumont in a position in readiness, while for the rest the field east of St. Privat had entirely been covered with fleeing French soldiers.

THE GUARD FUSILIER REGIMENT FOLLOWS UP TO ST. PRIVAT

The Guard Fusilier Regiment from its receiving position 600 meters west of St. Privat had been an inactive observer of the general advance on the village. General von Pape thought of it when he perceived the total dissolution of the other four regiments of his division in St. Privat and sent orders to it to start. The regimental commander, Major Feldmann, took all three battalions to the south side of the road and approached the hill immediately south of the village. En route he perceived the heavy cannon fire of the French artillery at the quarries of Amanweiler directed against the captured village, and decided to capture those batteries. With this intention he had already led the 1st Battalion as far as Jerusalem when he received orders from General von Pape to take up a position as closed up reserve at the southwest corner of the village. Only two skirmish platoons remained south of Jerusalem. The general then made a renewed attempt to gather men enough together in the village and this time had better success. These troops, belonging to different regiments, he then led to the east exit of the village. But here were already numerous men of the Guard, pursuing the fleeing enemy with fire and the feared counter attack did not materialize. Subsequent efforts of General von Pape and of General von Kessel, whom he met in the southern part of the village, were mainly directed towards again establishing order in the mixed

¹Recollections of General von Kessel. The French fired generally with badly acting shrapnel.

organizations. As this was impossible of execution within the village, assembly points were designated on the road to Ste. Marie. Not much was achieved in this at the start, for other forces were still coming from the rear toward St. Privat, filling up the space around the village and the village itself, and left no room for the attempts at establishing order.

THE ARTILLERY GOES INTO POSITION NORTH AND SOUTH OF
ST. PRIVAT

It was the Guard artillery which first hastened up behind the storming Guard Infantry. When Lieutenant von Esbeck arrived on hill 328 shortly before the assault and informed the skirmish groups there of the approach of the Saxons, a noncommissioned officer of the Regiment Königin called his attention to the fact that his men were suffering from the fire of the artillery in position in rear. At this time the fire of the Guard artillery had already been directed on St. Privat. About to ride toward the artillery, the officer suddenly saw the masses of the fleeing French on and along the road to Marengo and immediately perceived that the artillery would have the most favorable effect against that target from hill 328. He galloped to the artillery line in the rear and induced the 1st and 3d Horse Batteries of the Guard to proceed to hill 328. He then hastened to the Guard Hussar Regiment, halted south of Ste. Marie, to start it in pursuit of the enemy. The two batteries arrived on the hill just when the infantry there charged into the village and were able to fire for some time on the fleeing troops. Led by their example, other batteries followed and, while the last resistance was overcome in St. Privat, a new, long artillery line was formed, its left wing touching St. Privat, its right wing reaching as far as the Hessian batteries in their last position west of knoll 322. In this front the Guard batteries were mixed with those of the Xth Army Corps and the two batteries of the 5th Cavalry Division which had been brought to the battlefield. North of the road seven Saxon batteries and the four batteries of the 2d Foot Artillery Battalion of the Xth Army Corps took station in the space between St. Privat and the forest of Jaumont, to sweep the country east of the village with their fire. St. Privat set a limit to the space, and only a part of the batteries found room. South of the road two Guard batteries had to remain back and one battery entered the new line with only two pieces. North of the road nine Saxon batteries were kept back in their former position.¹ The remaining batteries formed a powerful front reaching from the Bois de la Cusse to the forest of Jaumont, being interrupted by the village of St. Privat. The batteries were brought to the front only gradually and, because of the limited space, continued to move with many crossings and much friction until it was completely dark. A few batteries were misdirected to entirely un-

¹The following batteries had to remain in rear: 3d Heavy and 4th Light, Guard Batteries; 4 pieces of the 6th Heavy, Guard Battery; 3d Heavy, 3d Light, 4th Light, 1st Heavy, 6th Light, 5th Light, 2d Light, 4th Heavy, 1st Light, XIIth Army Corps.

suitable points; for instance, the 1st Horse Battery, Xth Army Corps from the vicinity east of St. Ail to the vicinity north of St. Privat. Battalions became split up and there could be no question of unity in leadership. The batteries between St. Privat and the forest of Jaumont at the start directed their fire on the fleeing French detachments which had defended that strip during the assault on St. Privat and, after these had disappeared, the fire was directed on the French batteries at the quarries of Amanweiler. On account of the increasing darkness aim could be taken only on the flashes of the French guns. The range was underestimated and the shells bursting in the space east of St. Privat endangered the German pursuing infantry. The 1st Horse Battery of the 10th Army Corps which had gone astray, fired from north of St. Privat on targets appearing at the edge of Jaumont forest.

South of the road the larger number of the batteries arrived in the new position too late to do any material damage to the hostile infantry retreating toward Marengo. The fire and the main attention was directed principally on the large hostile military position at the quarries of Amanweiler which the opponent had gradually extended as far as the eastern vicinity of that village. Opposite the left wing especially, the hostile batteries were so placed in the quarries taking advantage of the different terraces there that they could fire from several positions behind each other. To hold down their fire, which was directed in part on St. Privat and in part on the German artillery south of the village, twelve batteries of the left wing turned their pieces in that direction. On the right wing partly the hostile artillery and partly the hostile infantry was fired on, the latter being seen marching off east of Amanweiler under protection of the division in position between Amanweiler and the quarries. Many good targets offered themselves in that direction. A part of the hostile infantry still held its place on knoll 322 and north of there. Its fire reached the new artillery position, and two batteries, the 5th and 6th Light, Xth Army Corps, came so close to the lost hostile infantry detachment when going into position in the center of the line that they were forced to make front and defend themselves with shells. The four batteries of the 1st Guard Foot Artillery Battalion not engaged in this change of position and which had stood from the start on the southern slope of ridge 321, fired, together with the Hessian batteries, on the enemy south of the railroad and on the village of Amanweiler, which was soon set in flames.

Thus the artillery fire did not play a very material role in the pursuit of the enemy retreating through Marengo. The infantry fire from St. Privat naturally had no far reaching effect. There was no thought of a pursuit by the troops in the village because of their confused state and the threatening attitude kept up by a part of the hostile infantry at the forest of Jaumont. While the fight still raged in St. Privat there approached fresh infantry, the 20th Infantry Division, which seemed fit to take up the pursuit of the French in an energetic manner.

A German Professional Final Judgment Concerning the Battle of St. Privat¹

THE fifth volume of *Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik*, published by the Great General Staff, which appeared a few days ago gives a very comprehensive picture of the great decisive battle of the 18th of August, 1870. This study, taken in large part from the Royal Saxon archives and from memories and recollections of numerous participants, pays also due attention to the late publications of the French General Staff and, with the utilization of the increased knowledge of events, gained by the Germans as well as the French, there has come a larger freedom of judgment as to persons and things. For this reason this publication does not hide itself behind the account of the battle published by the General Staff in 1875, though, as stated expressly in the foreword, a careful final examination of all material utilized has proven that the earlier account of the General Staff has been correct in almost all material points. A review of this new work will be published in a subsequent edition of this paper. To-day we will give a few extracts from the concluding comments of the study.

Of all the battles fought under his leadership as Chief of the General Staff of the Prussian Army, General von Moltke designated that of Königgrätz as the best planned in the wars of both 1866 and 1870-71. It is easily understood that he considered this magnificent victory especially highly, it being his first. With the same justification he could have cited the battle of Sedan, the success of which was so thoroughly prepared by the previous operations that there was no necessity for Royal Headquarters to issue any orders

¹Editorial from *Leipziger Zeitung* (No. 298, Supplement No. 1), December 24, 1906.

to the corps headquarters during the battle in order to preserve unity of action. The least successful battle was that of St. Privat—Gravelotte, because the design of Royal Headquarters prevailed only in part, or not all. If we look for the reasons for this, we find first, that what General von Moltke desired—the annihilation of the enemy on the heights of Metz through a double envelopment—could hardly be accomplished. Not however because it would have been impossible to envelop the enemy doubly. But it was not a question of a contracted front, as he supposed, but of such an extended one that it was hardly possible that all of the enemy's forces could be surrounded and forced to lay down their arms outside of Metz or driven off in a direction unfavorable to them. It was far more probable that a very material part would have had an opportunity to get away into Metz. That would not have been a complete annihilation but only a serious defeat, probably connected with a far reaching dispersing of the hostile forces. Even this was not attained because the envelopment was accomplished only against the French right wing which received by its pressure the direction of its retreat on Metz, while the other wing, which probably could have been forced away from Metz, was not enveloped. In this manner the French army, actually beaten at only one place, retreated undivided into Metz and, though that fortress later on changed into a trap which the army could not get free from, its situation at the start was not entirely hopeless, provided the desire for breaking through was adhered to tenaciously. The objective which General von Moltke endeavored to reach through the battle was thus not entirely attainable, and in so far as his intentions were possible of execution they were crossed not merely by the fact that the envelopment became effective only on the left wing but also by the premature attack of the center and right wing. On the whole, Royal Headquarters played the rôle of a spectator who had no opportunity to interfere in the course of events, though there was no absence of attempts to regain the reins of leadership. How are these remarkable facts to be explained? Two causes were the most prominent in interfering unfavorably: absence of far reaching recon-

naissance and the failure of communication between Royal Headquarters and the different army headquarters, especially that of the Second Army. Insufficiency of reconnaissance brought it about that General von Moltke based his battle orders on a conception of the situation which was near the truth but not entirely in consonance with it. But the effects of the failure of reconnaissance reached farther. They delayed the movements of the Second Army, allowed the IXth Army Corps to encounter the enemy prematurely and gave the First Army, which also interfered prematurely, a wrong conception of conditions with the opposing enemy, who was believed to be retreating on Metz. That communications between Royal Headquarters and Headquarters First Army failed at the most important moment, in that the verbal orders for the simultaneous attack on Gravelotte and from the forest of Vaux did not reach General Steinmetz in the intended wording, was in the main an unfortunate happening and had far reaching consequences. To this circumstance may be attributed the frontal attack of the VIIIth Corps and, in connection with an additional misunderstood direction from Royal Headquarters, the fact that the infantry of the VIIth Corps was held back for hours. It is true that in the afternoon hours Royal Headquarters was in direct communication with Headquarters First Army; but it was too late to bring about in the situation a change which would have been in consonance with the intentions of Royal Headquarters. That headquarters completely lost sight of the Second Army. Some reports were received, it is true, but these did not help rectify the original error of the belief that the French right wing extended only as far as Montigny la Grange. Not till evening was the real situation with the Second Army known and uncertainty reigned until the next morning concerning the outcome of the battle there, though there was no reason to doubt that success had been attained. The absence of communications did not concern merely the relations of Royal Headquarters to the different army headquarters. There was also absence of connection between these latter. In the Second Army the Guard and the XIIth Corps were in very loose communication with Prince Fred-

erick Charles in the afternoon. In the First Army the troops inserted in front were at times out of the higher leaders' hands. As far as reconnaissance is concerned we are compelled to say that great sins of omission were committed. This is acknowledged by all, especially as far as relates to August 17th. Nevertheless, this neglect needs an explanation, and this is found in the fact that the reconnaissance activities of cavalry were as yet little or not at all understood. It was believed that the main duties of the cavalry consisted not in reconnaissance but in battle activity. This applies to the entire period between the Wars of Liberation and the year 1870. Prior to the battle of Königgrätz the uncertainty of the situation is not less than it was on August 17, 1870. But in that battle prominent separate achievements enabled the Germans to perceive in time the position of the Austrians. Such prominent achievements were not present on the 17th of August and came too late on the 18th of August to have any effect on the leadership. It was during the campaign, and as a result of the experiences of the August days, that the necessary conclusions concerning cavalry reconnaissance were drawn, of course not always nor everywhere. At the present time there is no doubt concerning the duties of cavalry—to supply the highest leader continually and promptly with reports and not to await orders for doing so.

In the concluding comments of the study the methods of transmitting orders in those days are contrasted with the more valuable ones of to-day. The 18th of August is designated as a modern battle which had for the larger part to be fought with old fashioned means, and it is explained in detail that this applies also to infantry tactics and the needle gun. In this connection the concluding comments recite how the attack on the French position would have been made could present drill regulations and fire effect have been employed. If—it is said in one place in the account—we take conditions at St. Privat as they actually existed on August 18th, 1870, the attack, according to today's principles, would not have been unusually difficult; though we must not believe that the battle against a defender with modern arms can be brought to a finish as rapidly as was

done in those days. The position in readiness for the attack ought, of course, to be taken early in the morning in order to have the entire day for its execution. For today the fire fight opens at longer ranges than in those days, and pauses in the advance will frequently occur while the skirmish lines regain power for the further advance. It is the duty of all leaders to watch that the desire to press forward is not diminished, nor deadened by the use of the spade. A body of troops must finish its day's task and the leadership must create the time necessary therefor. We will pass over what the comments say concerning the rôle of field artillery in present day battle and also what is said about the losses on August 18th. The account concludes with the following, concerning the result of the day of battle: In comparison to the immense sacrifices on the German side the tactical success of the day is on the whole very small and the strategical success appeared but slowly. It is true that the Army of the Rhine was lamed for the time, but it was still in existence and for two months kept 200,000 Germans chained down; for the investment of Metz was not for the purpose of capturing that fortress but, as General von Moltke stated, of annihilating the Army of the Rhine. Had the French fought on August 18th with reversed front, without having had touch with the fortress, the success unquestionably would have been greater in the start and would undoubtedly have led far more quickly to the complete annihilation of the Army of the Rhine. The retreat of that army into the interior of France was hindered; it had to stop on the Mosel, and fresh German forces, the 3d Reserve Division, were already approaching from the frontier to bar the way. After the war much talk was heard of the power of attraction of that fortress and it was also said that the Army of the Rhine dug its own grave by retreating thereon. But we should not overlook the fact that a general different from Bazaine could have prepared quite other and far greater difficulties to the investment than was actually the case. If we imagine energetic and apt leaders in the places of Bazaine and MacMahon, the attempt at relief made by the Army of Chalons could have brought on a very dangerous

crisis, though the final outcome, favorable to the Germans, need not remain in doubt. Success is eventually decisive in the criticism of military actions. The decisive thing in this case was that General von Moltke understood as early as the 19th of August how to utilize the results of the 18th. The necessity of having to reckon in future with the Army of the Rhine was to him no obstruction to the immediate commencement of operations against the other main part of the French Imperial army, and the prospect of a favorable outcome was based on the fact that—in addition to the numerical superiority of the Germans—the maneuvering ability of the Army of the Rhine was materially decreased, if not entirely ended, on account of its having retreated into the fortress. Taking this view, the battle of St. Privat—Gravelotte is the most important and most eventful battle in the first half of the campaign, without precedent in audacity and correct sequence of operations, without precedent in the enormous struggle between two equally strong opponents and in the final result of the capture of an army which had but insignificantly lost its fighting power. Opposed to such a success the numerous frictions, reverses and wrong actions which the battle shows fall into the background. Just these frictions and reverses offer a number of instructive examples and it is necessary to let bright light shine on them to prevent our arriving at erroneous estimates and wrong conclusions which might influence the picture of the battle. In this sense Moltke says: “As a rule everything appearing absolutely improper and contradictory disappears entirely as soon as we perceive the motive, the thousands of frictions and difficulties, which the execution encountered.”

The 18th of August 1870¹

BY

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VOLUME 5 of the excellent and instructive *Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik*, which the Military-Historical Section I of the Great General Staff has been publishing for the past few years, is entitled "The 18th of August 1870." In Number 298 of 1906 we printed a short extract of the final comments of this book from which our readers could see in what an instructive and interesting manner questions of military history and tactics are handled. But it now behooves us to discuss the total contents of this work more closely, because the battle of St. Privat la Montagne—Gravelotte was for us Saxons of very great—almost world-historical—national importance; for it was the first decisive battle in the Franco-Prussian War in which also the XIIth (Royal Saxon) Army Corps battled side by side with its brothers from the north and the south and inscribed, under the leadership of both its Royal Princes, a new leaf of glory in its military history.

This volume is of importance and interest not only to the participants in that war, not only to the officer, desirous of instruction, but also for all men who have the love of their fatherland at heart, for it offers entirely new estimates and important statements, and the estimates of the situation and the measures taken by the leading personalities furnish an entirely new picture.

We will premise that the authors have also in this volume given us an exceedingly clear captivating account along broad lines of this complicated battle and have understood how to hold the reader's interest by dividing the battle into definite battle units and battle sectors, and in giving a clear picture of the battle groups by supplementing the volume with numerous maps and sketches.

¹From *Wissenschaftliche Beilage No. 11* of the *Leipziger Zeitung*, 16 March 1907.

Reading this volume and comparing its contents with prior accounts of this battle involuntarily reminds us of a statement made by von Oncken in reference to the method of writing the history of the Wars of Liberation: "In the old accounts the endeavor to belittle the deeds of other participants as much as possible so as to make our own merits shine more brightly is restrained by the exultant joy over the success of the dangerous undertaking; but the more time advanced, the more did this endeavor increase. Each military writer triumphantly claims for his own people the main share in the general success." In the descriptions of the battle in question it is not the exultant joy over the attainment of the great success by the united German races coming to the surface which arouses our antagonism; but the partisanship displayed.

The subsequent more thorough searching of the archives dealing with this war, the utilization of various and numerous recollections and memorials by participants, of regimental histories, published letters, etc., has in many instances put a different aspect on the events; but it remains very doubtful whether or not these subjective accounts are of more indisputable and essential value than the official accounts submitted immediately after the conclusion of the war. Each memorialist is inclined to color the account as regards his own achievements. General von Schimpff in his preface to *Das XII Korps im Kriege 1870-71* says: "Reports written subsequently, recollections, revised diaries should be used with caution, for it is merely human nature not to hide our light under a bushel measure, and after the lapse of years and when in possession of exact knowledge of all material factors, even with the most truth loving authors the original impressions become changed and consequently also the recital of the events."

It is of course correct that many military writers have recited and discussed the advance of the Prussian Guards on St. Privat la Montagne in a manner which must have deeply offended those brave troops. Woide¹ writes: "This prema-

¹*Die Ursachen der Siege und Niederlagen im Kriege 1870.* An attempt at a critical recital of the Franco-Prussian War up to the battle of Sedan; by Lieutenant General von Woide, Russian General Staff. Translated by Klingender from the Russian; Mittler & Son, Berlin, 1906;—vol. 2, p. 93.

ture attack, though executed with the greatest bravery, cost the Prussians dearly; thanks to the inactive attitude of the French, this incipient blunder of the Guards did not result in a complete defeat which in all probability would have decided the fate of the battles of August 18th." In his *Kriegsgeschichtlichen Beispielen*¹ Major Kunz has recited the battles around St. Privat la Montagne applicatorically and entirely to the great credit of the Guards, saying (on page 113): "No troops on earth could have attacked with greater bravery than did the Prussian Guard infantry on August 18, 1870." But von Schimpff, referring to Woide (vol. 2, p. 86), has the imprudence to write: "A lucky star brought it about that by this transposing of the two corps the Guard was called to extremely bloody and glorious achievements, but that Crown Prince Albert had the opportunity to bring about the main decision in the battle by his intrepid interference with the XIIth Corps on the extreme right wing of the French."²

This, however, left no rest to other critics. It appeared unbelievable that the Guard, the commissioned places of which were from time immemorial filled by the flower of the old Brandenburg--Prussian nobility, could not have the credit of bringing about the main success. Thus, as early as 1901, in the 6th and 7th Supplement to the *Militär Wochenblatt*, Colonel von Schack attempted to prove that Marshal Canrobert drew off his troops on the right wing, not because of the threatening envelopment by the Saxons, but because of the attack made by the Guards, and writes: "If the attack of the Guards caused the orders for the retreat, then the attack of the Guards brought about the victory and with this victory of Gravelotte--St. Privat opened the road to a Sedan, to an Imperial Crown!"

Thereupon the General Staff sent out question sheets to all participants in the war. And everything which was expected to materialize from these questions has now happened: the authors have succeeded in portraying the battles of St. Privat and the final capture of that village in such manner as leaves no doubt but that the Prussian Guard alone brought about the decision on the 18th of August by

¹Part 10.

²*Das XII Korps im Kriege 1870-71.* I, St. Privat la Montagne; by Col. von Schimpff. Dresden, 1901, Page 61. See p. 159 *ante*.

its premature attack on the village. All others—Saxons, Hessians, the IIIId, IXth and Xth Corps—are given credit for having bravely participated, but not for having gained the decision. The account admits at least that the crossing of the Guard Corps and the XIIth Corps on the morning of August 18th was caused by political considerations and that the premature attack of the Guard Corps in the afternoon on St. Privat was due to the apprehension that the Saxons might, through their enveloping movement, bring about the decision in the battle.

Turning now to the contents proper of the study, we have to determine first of all that Prince Frederick Charles, commanding the Second Army, kept entirely too long to the original view or preconceived belief that he had to seek and find the enemy northwest of Metz. The Second Army had entirely too much cavalry, yet the Prince failed to utilize that cavalry sufficiently for reconnaissance purposes; and this is the more remarkable because he had the reputation of being an efficient cavalry leader. Had he utilized his cavalry properly, he could have ascertained that the enemy had not marched off to Verdun on August 17th. When the commanding general of the IIIId Army Corps, von Alvensleben, had attacked the opponent in his position at Mars la Tour on the 16th "the strategic situation was clear to him since August 15th" and also that on August 16th he would be in contact, if not with the entire hostile army, then at least with a large part of it. Then the battle of August 16th proved that the entire hostile army was held and could advance no step, on this day, in the direction of the Maas. Why did the Prince not perceive the truth of this? On August 17th everything was quiet along this front, and German cavalry, the 12th (Royal Saxon) Cavalry Division was already on the road to Etain, and the road to Verdun had been found clear of the enemy.

It is admitted, on page 111, that reconnaissance, in the present day sense, was carried out by the 12th Cavalry Division; in contrast to the utilization of the other German cavalry. It is also stated: "During the next few hours the 12th Cavalry Division was the unit from which Prince Frederick Charles mainly expected reports." But, because of the pre-

conceived opinion of the Prince that the enemy had retreated toward the Maas, this body of cavalry had been given a wrong direction. The Prince held to this erroneous opinion even up to 4.30 p.m., August 18th, though it is clearly stated in General von Moltke's reply to General von Steinmetz, dated 4 a.m., August 18th, that "a right turn is being executed by us." "The fact that no reports were sent by the 12th Cavalry Division, because there was nothing to report, later on induced him to come to a different view of the situation." But still the Prince for a long time supposed "that the field of activity of his army lay in the northwest and only very gradually he arrived at the conclusion that the attack objective was to be sought in the east, under the influence of the fact that there was an enemy actually in the east and that it could not be ascertained with any degree of certainty that he was in the west." This dullness in the Prince's thought current, in contrast to Moltke's, is said to have had the benefit that the disadvantages of his directions for the advance of the Second Army, especially that of the crossing between the Guard and the XIIth Corps during the battle proper, were not very prominent.

When finally the view of conditions with the enemy had become clearer, the leaders of the corps in front independently arrived at their decisions, which on page 117 are described as "deserving great credit," although the actions of the Crown Prince in advancing with the advance guard on both banks of the Orne and taking a security position at the Bois de Ponty are criticised. But that is a matter of opinion.

The conduct of General Steinmetz is severely criticised and it is stated in general (page 121):¹ "It is not a satisfactory picture to see the conduct of the Germans during the forenoon hours of August 18th. There are of course satisfactory dispositions seen in the conduct of the commander of the Second Army, such as an order for attack, well thought out by an efficient and tried leader, independence, and the ardent desire to close with the enemy; but, predominating, are uncertainty and vacillation, error and misunderstanding; and the time in which the concentration before the hostile front ought to have been completed is filled with movements in the dark, which are very far from an orderly advance of an army against an enemy. The Guard and the

¹Comments on Chapter III.—Ed.

XIIth Corps still are far away from the enemy. In spite of the slow progress of action the First Army and the IXth Army Corps are cut off from the leadership and the attempts to stop the premature opening of the battle miscarry." But this hard judgment is somewhat softened by the statement on page 123: "It is but natural that the measures taken by the Prussian leadership in the forenoon of August 18th have aroused the critics in a high degree. To judge correctly we must place ourselves into the then existing situation of the leaders. They looked against a screen which hid the enemy's intentions and a part of his forces, and arrived at their final decision at a time when the screen was pierced only here and there and not fully raised. No matter how much we may blame, the faculty of arriving at a decision and the will for action in spite of the difficult conditions was present."

It is not our intention to discuss the entire course of the battle here, though there are a large number of interesting starting points for discussing the "pro and con;" we can discuss merely single events. Thus, on page 160 surprise is expressed that Ste. Marie aux Chênes was so weakly occupied by the French; but we must consider that this village was merely an advanced position in front of the main position of St. Privat, and was quite correctly utilized in this sense. In contrast to the German art of war, the French favor advanced positions. They fully accomplished their end in view—to force the enemy to deploy early. Military literature has pointed this out frequently.

The commanding general of the Guard Corps, Prince August of Württemberg, had directed General von Pape, commanding the 1st Guard Infantry Division, "not to continue the march farther to the north, but to form the division against Ste. Marie, and not to attack that place in earnest before the arrival of the expected Saxon Corps." With this end in view General von Pape then discussed with General Nehrhoff von Holdernberg, commanding the 24th Infantry Division, the combined attack on Ste. Marie aux Chênes,¹ after which the combined Guard batteries and the artillery of the 24th Division should turn against the hostile infantry north of the Ste. Marie aux Chênes—St. Privat la Montagne road. "The result was not long delayed; under the combined effect of the Saxon and Guard artillery the hostile

¹Page 261, *ante*.

infantry was forced to halt and, with the exception of some weaker detachments, finally fell back to the main position at St. Privat.”

How difficult it is to give an actually objective illustration of a battle is shown by the many contradictions to be found in this work. Thus on page 168 the Guard Hussars claimed to have observed at 12.30 p.m.¹ that the hostile position extended northward to beyond St. Privat and that also Roncourt was occupied, while on page 185 it is stated that Marshal Canrobert prolonged his front only at 2.30 p.m.² by three battalions of the 10th Line Regiment to halfway between St. Privat—Roncourt.

The error as regards the 46th Infantry Brigade—which was turned towards Moineville instead of Coinville—is deplorable; it could, however, have been offset by the brigade commander, Lieutenant Colonel von Montbé, had he kept closer to the main body, which as a matter of fact is the duty of every subordinate commander of rear echelons in the progress of an attack. He must never wait for orders, but must act independently. (See footnote, page 189.)³

Pages 226 to 228 discuss the measures of the two Saxon Princes for the envelopment of the hostile right wing. On page 228 the Saxons are blamed for being indirectly guilty for the “premature attack of the Guards.” The conduct of the XIIth Corps is even scored by citing Clausewitz as authority therefor: “The field of friction, of which Clausewitz says that it increases the difficulties of the apparently easy situation and differentiates between actual war and war on paper, is well illustrated by events in the XIIth Army Corps.”⁴

A very interesting point is the note concerning the attack on Ste. Marie aux Chênes: “The political tact displayed by General von Pape in giving up the west side of the village for the attack of the Saxons will be willingly acknowledged.”⁵ Then the reproach is expressed that Crown Prince Albert extended his enveloping movement too far beyond Montois

¹Page 247 *ante*.

²Page 261 *ante*.

³Page 265 *ante*.

⁴In Comments to Chapter IV.—Ed.

⁵*Ibid*.

la Montagne without reporting this fact to army headquarters, and at the same time Prince Frederick Charles is blamed for not having changed his location farther to the north during the battle, and thus having had an opportunity to bring the frontal attack and the envelopment into consonance. As a matter of fact, all plausible reasons are sought out in order to free the Guard Corps from the blame of a premature attack.

Crown Prince Albert had caused Prince August of Württemberg, commanding the Guard Corps, to be informed that he would start the march for the enveloping movement of Roncourt and St. Privat at 5 p.m. Prince August did not take into consideration how much time this march would take and only considered "that a decisive attack in front was necessary," and he also possessed the justifiable ambition to give his corps full share in the expected victory, especially as on August 18th it encountered the enemy for the first time. Of course rapid action was necessary to allow the Guard Corps to interfere with success; "a combined deployment of the Guard infantry and a preparation of the attack by the artillery could not be waited for."¹ Prince August of Württemberg decisively declined the offer of the commander of the corps artillery of the Xth Corps to prepare the attack with his batteries—he was firm in his decision for the immediate attack. "The expectation at army headquarters that the decisive action would commence very soon also increased to impatience." The Guard batteries of General Prince zu Hohenlohe were already in action south of St. Ail. Prince zu Hohenlohe has written in his memoirs and in the History of the Guard Artillery concerning these events. Toward 5.30 p.m. he saw how the hostile fire in front of St. Privat la Montagne increased in volume. "This freshly started fire was however not aimed at the corps artillery. The Prince asked the Colonel, 'What does this mean? For God's sake! Our infantry is attacking in front before the Saxons have completed their enveloping.'"²

Prince August of Württemberg was so completely taken

¹Page 275 *ante*.

²Page 285 *ante*.

up with this desire for attack that he cut short all remonstrances and objections of General von Pape with the words: "Hurry up now; everything takes so long with you."¹ These discussions between the separate commanders, which are given to us from the copious literature of recollections, are of course very interesting but offer no pleasant spectacle. General von Kessel called General von Dannenberg's attention to the fact that several intact hostile battalions were lying in front of St. Privat la Montagne which ought to be silenced first of all by artillery fire, but the latter replied with great assuredness: "We attack. If we do not take St. Privat the Saxons will get it ahead of us. The brigade will reap the harvest of today." In the comments on page 448 the premature attack is strongly censured: "Whatever was directed for carrying out the attack was wrong in almost every instance," and at another place it is stated, "Action was taken without seeing the conditions."

The account of the advance of the Guard Infantry Brigade also offers no picture of adept leadership. A few batteries of the Saxon 24th Division had the intention of facilitating through their fire the advance of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade. But it is stated on page 419:² "Thus the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade did not have a continued support from the Saxon artillery." Compare with this the Saxon opinions concerning the attack of the Guards, for example in the work "*König Albert, Fünfzig Jahre Soldat*," pages 213-214.³

In the work in question, it is then stated on page 427:⁴ The retreat of the troops from the advanced lines, in connection with the danger of envelopment threatening from Montois la Montagne caused the conviction in Marshal Canrobert's mind that the retreat to Metz was unavoidable and that the only thing left to do was to secure the line of retreat leading through Marengo and Saulny by holding the village of St. Privat. Therefore it was the threatening envelopment

¹Page 293 *ante*.

²Page 306 *ante*.

³Read Kunz's book, page 82, how he estimates the activity of the Saxon artillery.

⁴Page 313 *ante*.

by the XIIth Corps which was a very decisive factor in the decision, and not only the attack of the Guards which had just then come to a standstill, as Colonel von Schack maintains.¹ Compare herewith also the report of the battles of the Guard on pages 442 *et seq.*,² where the enormous losses of the disrupted and dispersed 1st Guard Brigade and the retreating, leaderless soldiers are discussed. General von Pape did not consider the situation as very hopeful. He sent his orderly officer, Lieutenant von Esbeck, called von Platen, to the left wing to find out if Saxon batteries could not fire on the village and to ascertain how close the Saxons then were and what they were doing. Many of the Saxon participants will doubtless remember the young, dashing, fresh Hussar officer galloping up to the Saxon battalions to request their help for the Guards.

Prince August of Württemberg also anxiously awaited reinforcements. "The longer the Prince viewed the battlefield with all its horrors, the more he gained the conviction that even the 4th Foot Guard Regiment would be unable to bring this horrible battle to a victorious conclusion. Fresher, stronger forces were needed to overcome the enemy, and these could be brought only by the Saxons, whose interference had then been waited for for two hours." "In place of rapid success a long drawn out battle with enormous losses had ensued, and the non-appearance of the Saxons, whose help he did not consider necessary in the start to gain the victory, he now felt painfully."³

These expressions of the situation of the battle in the afternoon hours appear to justify the independent action on the part of the orderly officer of General von Pape, Lieutenant von Esbeck, and the longing for the interference by the Saxons appears to have made itself felt everywhere. However, this energetic young officer is indirectly blamed subsequently, in the statement on page 509:⁴ "Lieutenant von Esbeck, called von Platen, had no orders to divert the Saxon advance on St. Privat. He acted independently under the impression that the left wing of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade north of the large basin did not make any progress

¹Supplement to *Militär Wochenblatt*, 1901; Part 6 and 7.

²Page 318 *et seq.*, *ante*.

³Page 326, *ante*.

⁴Page 301, *ante*.

toward Roncourt; also it was not his intention to draw the Saxons onto St. Privat, but only to hasten their advance on Roncourt, which he believed to be still occupied. It was again an independent decision of the Saxon leaders when they took the direction of St. Privat la Montagne, where they perceived the main focus of the battle to be; and they of course left Roncourt on one side because it apparently had already been evacuated by the enemy. Lieutenant von Esbeck could ride back to his division commander with the knowledge that now the battle north of the road would come to a victorious end. South of the large basin he encountered General von Kessel and called to him: 'The victory is ours; the Saxons are coming!' The general grasped him by the hand. The same message he called out to skirmishers of the 1st Guard Infantry when passing them. They replied to it with cheers."

How at that time, in 1870, everybody was imbued with the view that it was the Guard that must bring about the decision is clearly shown in the orders issued by General von Wittich shortly before 5 p.m. to the Guard Rifle Battalion: "The Guard will advance about 5 p.m., in order to bring about the decision."

The subsequent development of things before the final charge is very graphically recounted and the last moments before the storm of the village very dramatically on page 521.¹ The statement on page 524 that the Saxon batteries could not act effectively against St. Privat, is in contradiction with all Saxon reports and also with Kunz (page 92). Nearly all military authors agree that the specific details of the battles immediately in front of and in St. Privat cannot be given with exactitude; in this work, however, the attempt is made to do this as far as the Guard regiments are concerned, and success in this has been obtained with great literary adeptness.

Though the account of the conduct of the battle produces much edification and exaltation, that impression is materially reduced in the subsequent comments. We will emphasize a good sentence in these comments: "It is one of the peculiarities of war that but seldom is everything fully accomplished which the leadership tries to attain by the battle. We should therefore not find fault with great

¹Page 361, *et seq.*, *ante*.

decisions because the success was not up to expectations. It is to the glory of the German leadership on August 18th that the firm will of proud spirits to conquer was present, which, as Clausewitz says, like the obelisk toward which the main streets of a town lead overtops everything as the central point of the art of war." It is very sad that this magnanimity of cautioning against criticism was not practiced in this work. The appearance as a leader in the field of Prince Frederick Charles fades before the bulk of reproaches and it would have been very desirable had the General Staff not gone so far in the inexorable impulse for love of truth.

With full justice the "insertion by dribblets of the forces against the hostile front" is criticized; but it should be pointed out that higher authority has stated that the measures taken and the formations on the German left wing, especially with the XIIth Corps, had been excellent in regard to their well-planned, well-aimed and united action. How does the fault-finding agree with the subsequent comment on page 571: "And, in spite of all, this result in the confluence of all forces in one front before the final decision!" Compare Woide, Volume 2, page 85.

We also would prefer a little less criticism in regard to blaming the disposition of forces in the enveloping of Roncourt, for the wrong disposition of forces arose only when the Saxons hastened up for support on the request of Lieutenant von Esbeck. The troops were formed at the start according to regulations. But this hastening up for support by a few Saxon regiments is described by the history writers in Berlin as an abomination, and on that account mention is made only on page 563 of one report of Lieutenant von Esbeck according to which there was no intention of drawing the troops toward St. Privat la Montagne and the rapid action of the independent Saxon leaders is laid as a blame at their door. We well remember, and we could name many witnesses, that the young Guard Hussar officer galloped up in haste and great excitement and begged them, for God's sake, to bring support to the Guards, who were bleeding to death in front of St. Privat.

The envelopment of Roncourt is then criticised as not

having been made sufficiently far reaching, as it should have been extended to the quarries of Jaumont. This is in direct contradiction to previous statements where the far reaching extension through Montois la Montagne was criticised. And while other writers¹ describe this envelopment movement of the XIIth Corps as the most decisive one, it states here, on page 565:² "But from all this the conclusion should not be drawn that the envelopment by the XIIth Army Corps was entirely without result. * * * * * If we keep to the facts, we find that the movement of the Saxons, though not resulting in a complete envelopment, shortened the resistance of the French and materially conduced to the fact that the 18th of August ended with a decisive effect against the French right wing." Crown Prince Albert receives praise: "In war it is a difficult art to await the regulation movement of troops for a definite object, when strong influences of the battlefield appear to demand an earlier utilization, be that to help other troops, or be it to hasten the delayed decision. Proper attributes of the commander in the field are shown by the ability to set a deaf ear against such impressions and never to lose sight of the final objective." And at another place it is stated: "Therefore the Crown Prince acted as he had to act under conditions as seen by him." On the other hand on page 578 he is refused acknowledgment of having that "strong, pityless will"³ necessary to immediately take up the pursuit of the fleeing enemy and gather still greater fruits of the victory. The concluding sentence of this chapter reads: "Royal Headquarters interfered with the First Army, where the battle had remained undecided, in order to separate the corps and take them back for the larger part to behind the Mance defile, because there was expectation of a continuation of the battle on the next morning, and possibly even an attack. In the Second Army however the troops had the proud right to pass the night on the ground which they had captured from the enemy in hot battle." In the concluding comments, which have been published before in these columns, the attack on St. Privat la Montagne is very instructively discussed with reference to present day battle maxims.

¹ Woide, vol. 2, page 86.

² Comments—Ed.

³ Moltke, *Geschichte des deutsch-französischen Krieges, 1870-71*; page 324.

Though the contents of this work are captivating and instructive, though the many teachings of tactics and battle leadership are of great use to the future officers of the army, we have to acknowledge that this book has not made an edifying impression on us, for it contains too many contradictions.

The 18th of August 1870¹

BY

COLONEL VON KRETSCHMAR

I WOULD like to add a few remarks and corrections to those published in Supplement No. 11 of the *Leipziger Zeitung* of March 16, 1907, relating to Vol. 5 of *Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik* published by the Great General Staff.

These studies of events of the 18th of August contain several erroneous remarks concerning the artillery of the XIIth Army Corps which I must combat. My corrections are especially aimed at some statements, contained in the text and in the sketches, as to the time of the appearance of the batteries and battalions in the different positions. These statements deviate considerably from those given in the General Staff Account of the War of 1870-71, in the works of General von Schimpff concerning the XIIth Army Corps, and in the History of the Royal Saxon Field Artillery, compiled by me. The time periods given in these works were ascertained at that time from the battle reports of the different organizations; which, with different and better sources, are at the disposal of the compilers of this present fifth volume and these various works are referred to in several places as sources of information.

In regard to some material time periods I am myself able to state the absolutely correct time. As adjutant at that time to the commander of the artillery of the XIIth Army Corps I noted down these time periods by the watch at time and place or very shortly thereafter and in addition I put down, on the evening of August 18th, in my personally kept diary, exact notes of the battle; noted the position of the batteries on the map, or on specially drawn sketches. Furthermore I personally carried a part of the orders in question to the battalions and to the corps artillery and am

¹From *Wissenschaftliche Beilage* No. 29 to the *Leipziger Zeitung* July 20, 1907.

today still able, in connection with accessory circumstances, to state correctly and definitely the exact time periods.

Finally, to put aside all doubt as to the correctness of my statements and as to the correctness of watches carried, I will remark that each day, when orders were distributed at Headquarters Second Army, to the adjutants of the different army corps, the time was given out and so transmitted to the troops when corps headquarters issued their orders. (I personally went for orders to Pont à Mousson on August 16th and thus my watch was probably absolutely correct.)

The statements given in the fifth volume from later and posthumous sources are often unreliable, as has been proved in several instances.

It is remarkable that the first statements of time periods in this work agree absolutely with my statements and the reports of the troops engaged; the differences commence to appear where the support of the attack made by the Guards on St. Privat la Montagne is taken up.

For instance, page 131, first line: "Their (advance guard battalion, IXth Corps) first shots were fired between 11.45 and 12 a.m." I noted down in Jarny according to my watch "12 noon"; History of the Field Artillery, page 120, I stated "toward 12 noon"; von Schimpff says, page 77, "shortly before noon."

The time stated on page 172 also "shortly after 2.30 the 6th Heavy Battery which had arrived first opened fire"² corresponds exactly with the battle report of the corps artillery, which gives this time period as "2.30 p.m."

The time for the advance of the corps artillery from the first position west of Ste. Marie aux Chênes into the second position west of the Ste. Marie aux Chênes—Auboué road is given by the statement on page 183 by "Only after Ste. Marie aux Chênes had been taken did the corps artillery receive orders from corps headquarters to advance by echelons from the right wing"³, and by the report of General von Pape to his corps headquarters (page 177) "Ste. Marie aux Chênes taken at 3.45 p.m." The reports of battle of the corps artillery and batteries of the 24th Division agree with this, they giving the time of the advance into that position as between 3.30 and 4 p.m.

²Page 250 *ante*.

³Page 260 *ante*.

From here on the time periods given in this work very often differ materially from those heretofore considered correct. The statements on page 188¹ in regard to the commanding general of the XIIth Army Corps must cause a wrong impression. After concluding the comments on the capture of Ste. Marie, it reads: "The commanding general of the XIIth Army Corps, Crown Prince Albert, had ridden from Batilly to the ravine of Auboué west of Ste. Marie," etc., and in the next sentence: "he informed Prince George of what he had seen and ordered him," etc; and later on: "These orders were transmitted by Prince George about 4 p.m." This makes it appear that Crown Prince Albert was at the ravine of Auboué "about 4 p.m." or a little earlier, while as a matter of fact he and his staff, with which I was, had arrived on the hill west of Ste. Marie aux Chênes before 3 p.m.

From this hill we watched the three batteries of the 24th Division going into position and all of us saw the first shot fired by the 4th Heavy Battery and we remember that the projectile struck the highest part of the side of a tall, white building (not the garden wall as is stated on page 171², 4th line from bottom). In addition I rode from that hill to the three batteries and had just reached the 3d Heavy Battery when the battery commander, Captain Keysselitz, and a cannoneer were wounded. Lieutenant Exner was already in command of the battery.

Therefore on sketch 14 the mark designating the commanding general of the XIIth Army Corps should have been placed on the right wing of the corps artillery between the 6th Heavy Battery and the projecting corner of the forest south of it. That is the place where we actually stood "before the attack on Ste. Marie." At this point (at the start on the right, later on, on the left wing of the corps artillery) the Crown Prince remained until after 6 p.m. (von Schimpff, page 124³) and from there proceeded to the left wing of the corps, thereafter to Roncourt. This is proven also by the statement of this work on page 507⁴: "Shortly

¹Page 264 *ante*.

²Page 250 *ante*.

³Page 197 *ante*.

⁴Page 349 *ante*.

after 6 p.m. Crown Prince Albert proceeded to the woods of Auboué.”

A further discrepancy is found in giving the time of the advance of the batteries of the corps artillery and those of the 24th Division from the position on the Ste. Marie aux Chênes—Auboué road to the road leading from Ste. Marie to Hautmécourt.

The Crown Prince considered this advance necessary to prepare the subsequent attack on the enemy's main position and “ordered General Köhler to take the entire available artillery forward to beyond the Ste. Marie aux Chênes—Auboué road.” These orders were issued about 4.30 p.m. and there is no disagreement as to this time contained in any of the battle reports. The time also corresponds to the further events after the capture of Ste. Marie: 3.30 p.m. After that place had been taken the corps artillery had no target to fire on in the location it then held and for that reason the 3d Battalion of the corps artillery had already advanced north of Ste. Marie as far as the road to Auboué, the 4th Battalion remaining back for the time being. From here General Köhler led the entire corps artillery into a position alongside of the road to Hautmécourt, into which later the batteries of the 24th Division came, so that toward 5 p.m. 12 batteries were in position there. Sketch 17 shows this position of the batteries, but in the legend on the sketch it says: “The artillery of the XIIth Army Corps north of Ste. Marie aux Chênes went into this position only after 5.30 p.m.” This is not correct, for at that time, 5.30 p.m., the forward movement of the batteries was already taking place, which movement brought them from the Ste. Marie aux Chênes—Hautmécourt road into a position southeast of the thickets of Auboué facing toward Roncourt. The orders for this forward movement were given to me personally in presence of General Köhler by the Crown Prince at 5.15 p.m. and I can vouch for the truth of the following. From the hill west of Ste. Marie aux Chênes I rode to the Ste. Marie aux Chênes—Hautmécourt road (about 2500 meters) and there gave the orders to the commander of the corps artillery, Colonel Funcke, that is between 5.14 and 5.30 p.m. While making that movement the fire was stopped and the

advance made by batteries through the bottom in front toward Roncourt. The batteries arriving first took a position on hill 258 west of the Ste. Marie—Montois la Montagne road; Colonel Funcke, with whom I rode, led the batteries arriving later farther to the front, to hill 269 (distance 1300 meters, took 15 minutes at a walk) and here all the batteries gradually went into position. That was between 5.45 and 6 p.m. I remember these facts quite well for the following reason: I rode for a time with the 7th Heavy Battery and greeted a comrade whom I passed close by. These time periods were ascertained in 1871 in answer to a question asked of the 12th Artillery Brigade by Captain von Hodenberg, detailed to the Great General Staff. To answer that question a conference was held by all battery and battalion commanders who participated in the battle of August 18, 1870.

I wrote the answer to Captain von Hodenberg's question, basing it on the battle reports and the times given therein (date of my answer December 14, 1871) and that answer is now deposited in the Royal Saxon Archives, which the compilers of this work had access to.

The battle report of the 12th Artillery Brigade reads: "By repeatedly pushing the left wing ahead the batteries of the corps artillery advanced to fire on the village of Roncourt. Orders for this they received at 5.30 p.m."

The battle report of the corps artillery reads: "The corps artillery received orders at 5.15 p.m. to effectively prepare, in conjunction with the divisional artillery, the attack on Roncourt, and this was executed in two positions."

In confirmation of the correctness of the time stated the following should also be considered: After several—how many I cannot say—batteries had opened fire on Roncourt in the *second* position on the Ste. Marie aux Chênes—Montois la Montagne road, I rode back—this time through the northern part of Ste. Marie aux Chênes—and found the Crown Prince and his staff still at the same place, hill west of Ste. Marie, where I had left them (Sketch 15). This position he "left soon after 6 p.m." (page 507); therefore I must have been there before that time. This proves that the advance of the corps artillery to the Ste. Marie—Montois

road must have taken place between 5.15 and 5.30 p.m. and the previous position north of Ste. Marie (Sketch 17) been occupied to about 5 p.m. In the book of Lieutenant Colonel Rouquerol "*L'artillerie dans la bataille du 18 aout*," on page 293, the time of the second advance of the Saxon battery toward Roncourt, i. e. into the position east of the Ste. Marie aux Chênes—Montois la Montagne road, is given as "toward 6 p.m."

The account on pp. 523¹ and 524 of the advance of the Saxon batteries against St. Privat la Montagne as far as opposite Roncourt requires correction in several places. The account of this advance creates the impression that the greatest disorder obtained. The remark on page 524² "By the time this (i. e. the newly taken position) was in good order and all batteries in position, St. Privat was already in the hands of the Germans", must not be understood to mean that the Saxon batteries found no time to prepare the attack on St. Privat, for that would be contrary to actual events.

The orders of the Crown Prince—mentioned on page 524—for the closer advance toward St. Privat were received by the corps artillery from Lieutenant von der Planitz at 6.30 p.m. Thus the battle report of the corps artillery states, adding, "fire was opened (in the new position) at 6.45 p.m." The batteries of the 23d and 24th Divisions arrived at the same time in that position; the 2d Light Battery reports "6.45 p.m.;" the 1st Heavy "from 6.45 (it remained there) until 7.30 p.m.;" the 4th Light "about 6.30 p.m.;" the 4th Heavy was in this position until "7.15 p.m." These reports can undoubtedly be considered correct; reports reading otherwise can be only capricious or artful combinations.

In any case about 7 p.m. 16 batteries were in this position and directed their fire on St. Privat. I can very minutely remember this time and the position of the batteries, because that time is connected with a special event. I had ridden with General Köhler from Roncourt, where the Crown Prince and his staff remained, along the line of batteries which, according to my recollection, were in good

¹Page 361-63 *ante*.

²Page 362 *ante*.

order, firing on St. Privat to their right wing, and was observing through the glasses the excellent effect of the projectiles knocking down the buildings on the north side of the village, when Colonel Schörmer, commanding the ammunition columns greeted the general. Half jokingly the latter blamed the colonel for "taking a pleasure ride among his batteries," when the colonel who was between us two was seriously wounded by a shot through the abdomen. On this account the entire situation is vivid in my recollections.

The above mentioned extract from page 524 of this work is in direct contradiction to the statements of Colonel Rouquerol, who says (page 286):

"As to the preparation for the attack of St. Privat, that was only made in reality after the occupation of Roncourt by the XIIth Corps, when the Saxon artillery had completed a semicircle of mouths of fire which effected an actual reduction in the power of resistance of the 6th Corps. Furthermore, as we see, the final attack of the Guard on St. Privat could not have been delivered without the assistance of the Xth Corps and without the general strain due to the flank attacks conducted by the XIIth Corps. Without that circumstance the infantry of the Guard, unassisted, would have been totally unable to deliver that supreme effort and would have remained beaten to earth at least 400 meters from the French lines."

This extract judges the operations of the Saxon artillery more justly and is far more in consonance with actual events than the remarks on page 524 of this work.

In connection with the position of the Saxon artillery at Roncourt an advance was made finally by seven batteries to opposite St. Privat. The commander of the corps artillery, Colonel Funcke, had already taken steps for this advance when the batteries had to cease firing on St. Privat on account of the gradual advance of the storming infantry. First the heavy batteries of the corps artillery advanced by echelon; the 7th Heavy Battery, according to its battle report, opened fire on the enemy retreating in the direction of Jaumont at 7.30 p.m. The fire of the batteries ceased with darkness.

In conclusion I desire to make a few remarks as to the

statements contained on page 3, 3d paragraph, concerning the French artillery.¹ Compare with this also Rouquerol.

The French shell were supplied with a time fuse which could be timed only for two ranges, 1200 and 2800 meters. Therefore it was directed in the French regulations to fire only at mid range, 1500—1800 meters. It is self evident that sighting shots were impossible with these shell and were never resorted to. To this fact may be ascribed the small effect of the French artillery. In an order issued by French artillery headquarters dated August 23, 1870, it is directed that for each piece 3 shell with percussion fuses are to be kept in readiness in the caisson—a very interesting fact, not known until now.

The foot note on page 533:² "The French as a rule fired with badly working shrapnel" is not correct and that statement undoubtedly is attributable to the erroneous views springing out of present day conditions, that all projectiles exploding in the air have to be shrapnels. The French shell burst in the air also.

Besides this, the supply of the French batteries as far as ammunition is concerned consisted mainly of shell. Concerning this Colonel Rouquerol says on page 24: "As to the shrapnel they formed but a small part of the supply" and "the loads were computed on a weight of 37 shrapnel per 4 pounder caisson, 17 shrapnel per 12 pounder caisson."

Shrapnel is not mentioned at all as a matter of fact.

VON KRETSCHMAR,

Colonel, reserve list.

¹"The French employed both shell and shrapnel the chief weakness of which was defective fuses. The shell fuses could only be used at ranges of from 1400 to 1600 meters and of from 2650 to 2950 meters. At other ranges the shell could be used only as solid shot. The shrapnel fuses (of the cylinder type) could only be set in the heavy guns at 500, 800, 1100, and 1400 meters and in the light at 500, 800, 1000 and 1200 meters."—Introduction to *Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik*, Vol. V, p. 3.

²Page 370 ante.

FROM
Life Recollections of
Gustav von Schubert¹

(Part 7—Chapter XXII)

The Battle of St. Privat

ON August 15, which, being Napoleon's Day, was at that time of special importance in France, we fully expected a contact with the enemy, our expectations being strengthened by the fact that the division, as part of the corps, was concentrated at 5 a.m. at the small town of Delme to serve as a strategical reserve in readiness. It was rumored that a sortie of the French army from Metz was expected. The impatiently looked for orders for the advance did not arrive, however, and consequently we stood under arms until the afternoon, good weather fortunately obtaining. As the men were not permitted to cook, there were many drunken men who had tried to still the gnawing at their stomachs with liquor. Only toward 4.45 did we start the march, debouching in a southwesterly direction. On this fine summer evening we traversed the nice, hilly country situated on both sides of the Seille, and this shortened our march; but when it commenced to get dark relaxation and weariness made themselves felt. Only at 11 p.m. did the leading elements of the division reach Nomény where headquarters took quarters, while the troops, the last of which did not arrive

¹Lieutenant General (then Lieutenant Colonel) Gustav von Schubert was, in 1870, Chief of Staff of the 23d Division and of the XIIth Army Corps. His *Life Recollections* were compiled by him in Dresden, 1891-92, from the diaries which he had kept without break since his boyhood. A few notes and additions were subsequently made from time to time. After the General's death these memoirs were published by Dr. Hans von Schubert, Stuttgart and Leipzig, 1909.

until 2 a.m., went into bivouac. Being very tired the men threw themselves down to sleep without first cooking. I secured a place to sleep for a few hours in a private house; but little thought of sleep could be entertained because of the delayed issue of orders.¹ The day had been exceedingly tiresome, bringing many stragglers and footsore in its wake.

Very early on the morning of August 16 rumors of an imminent battle gained ground. The army corps received orders to reach by 9 o'clock the bridge across the Mosel at Pont à Mousson where Prince Frederick Charles of Prussia intended to have it march past him. The division therefore had to begin cooking very early after a short night's rest, and had to start at 6 a. m. to arrive there at the correct time, as it was to form the leading element of the corps. The footsore were all formed into one company and left at Pont à Mousson as garrison. We saw them again only at Paris, for whatever falls out from an organization during operations—that is, the so-called march casualties, is as good as lost to that organization. In spite of weariness and discouragement our men tried to put their uniforms and arms into as good shape as possible, to create a good impression on Prince Frederick Charles whom up to then they had not seen and who had the reputation of being a strict and sharp soldier. Our hopes, however, were vain, for he did not appear at the designated time. It was said he had ridden to meet the enemy. In his stead our honored Crown Prince had us march past him, after we had waited some hours at the foot of the ancient town ruins of Mousson enthroned high up on the picturesque cliffs of the Mosel valley. A war bridge had been thrown across the Mosel above the town; a curious feeling took possession of me as I now crossed the

¹"It is a peculiar thing with larger headquarters in the field; the smallest thing can assume the utmost importance, each word must be weighed and every circumstance considered. At headquarters no one is ever idle, for if at any time there is nothing actually to be done the brain still continues to work; in mind we review our troops, consider the terrain, estimate the known situation; the map is again resorted to, new combinations figured out. And in addition we know that the life and welfare of so many may be endangered, even that the entire success of an operation can be jeopardized by a single erroneous measure taken. We have most freedom when on the move; for then higher headquarters direct everything in general." (Life of General von Goeben; published by Zernin, 1895, Vol. I, page 233.)

second important stream which had hitherto separated us from the enemy. In the pleasant valley of the Mosel there reigned an oppressive heat which made itself uncomfortably felt when we again resumed the march at 1 p.m. to advance a few miles more toward the west. The defile-like road led uphill all the way and was entirely devoid of shade, so that numerous men, especially from the 2d Grenadier Regiment, fell down from exhaustion. The country on the left bank of the Mosel proved to be a gently rolling plateau, for the most part under cultivation, covered with large and small pieces of woods and traversed by rows of tall poplars. As the wind was from a contrary direction we had no idea of and did not hear the noise of a battle of world importance taking place a few miles north of us.

Toward 3 or 4 o'clock division headquarters reached its night quarters, Regniéville en Haye, and lodged there with the Catholic priest, a fat, sly, peevish man, whose room I shared, the Prince occupying the guest room as usual. He tried his best to pump me but of course learned nothing. A bed had been prepared for me on the floor, and I had just lain down, at about 10.30 p.m., to wait for the time to transmit the orders, which had not yet arrived from corps headquarters, for the march on the 17th, when I heard the arrival of a rider in front of the house and immediately after Captain von Klenck of the Guard Cavalry Regiment fell into the room, dirty, heated, and excited. He brought an order from Prince Frederick Charles directing our corps to advance immediately toward the road leading from Metz to Verdun. This brave officer and his squadron had formed the right flank guard for our cavalry division advancing toward the Maas, had then, following up the sound of cannon, arrived in the vicinity of Tronville and witnessed in the evening hours the battle raging there—the battle of Mars la Tour. Here Prince Frederick Charles had charged him with seeking out the Saxon corps and calling its infantry and artillery to the battlefield the next morning. At the time of his departure the battle according to his impression was not going well. He had then ridden off by himself and, thanks to his sense of locality, his decision and his excellent charger, a few

hours later reached our headquarters which were from 12 to 16 miles distant from the battlefield—a remarkable achievement, especially as the night was inky black. The division was immediately alarmed and Colonel von Montbé at once started out with one regiment of his brigade (46th) which camped in our village, as an advance guard toward Thiaucourt. The Crown Prince in Pont à Mousson and the neighboring Guard Corps, whose headquarters we had casually learned when crossing the Mosel, were informed. Thereafter we rode to the place of assembly of the division, west of Regniéville.

As an almost incredible darkness reigned it took a long time before the division was assembled from its distant villages and bivouacs, and the march could be commenced only at 3 a.m., August 17th; being made at the start on Thiaucourt, four miles distant. We had not removed our clothes and rode off without breakfast, full of anticipation of what the day would bring us and especially glad that we had our troops together. At sunrise we arrived at Thiaucourt, a pretty little town in a deep valley, and marched into position on the hills on the other side of the town, where our Crown Prince and corps headquarters soon joined us. Numerous wagons loaded with wounded met us coming from the direction of Metz. We were told by the wounded that yesterday's battle had been very bloody and had been undecided. Cannon fire, which would have indicated a resuming of the battle, could not be heard, however, and therefore we halted here for one hour. The Crown Prince regaled us with a cup of coffee. In order to hasten the march he directed the removal of knapsacks, an opportunity which most of the men utilized to put on clean underclothes. Many a poor fellow put on his death shirt. But the spirit of the men was good and all were ready to do battle.

From Thiaucourt we took, with the Crown Prince, a more northerly direction and, with security measures, advanced through Xammes and Hagéville toward Mars la Tour. We still were met by transports of wounded, but the eagerly expected reports of our patrols said nothing of the enemy. Finally I myself rode with the advance guard and in the

first afternoon hours encountered near Mars la Tour on the Metz—Verdun road Prussian cavalry (the 12th Thuringian Hussar Regiment of the Cavalry Division Rheinbaben) whose outposts we immediately relieved. That cavalry was still under the impressions of the preceding day and its battles, and evidently very glad to be relieved. They knew nothing whatever of the enemy in their front—which was remarkable—save that it had retreated northward at break of day. Captain von Treitschke therefore proceeded with a squadron of the 1st Cavalry Regiment to reconnoiter toward Jarny. The division went into a single bivouac behind the village of Mars la Tour, while the Prince and his staff took quarters in a castle-like building within the village. I lodged in a small house in the garden. The traces of yesterday's battle showed everywhere, all houses were full of wounded. In the vestibule of the church we saw a few dead Prussian officers with gaping wounds, and, as we learned from patrols that there were still numerous wounded lying unattended on the battlefield north of the village, our sanitary detachment was sent out to find them and bring them into the village. Toward evening wagon loads of these unfortunates arrived, but with the best will it was impossible to shelter them under a roof. With the assistance of the Catholic chaplain, Dr. Wahl, who spoke French fluently, I examined all houses, and only after strenuous efforts and after dark, did we succeed in arranging a provisional camp for the wounded behind a stone wall where they received medical attention. Amongst those thus brought in was the body of Colonel Count Finkenstein of the Prussian Guard Dragoons, whose head had been cleft in two. Later on our Treitschke returned from his reconnaissance, which, accompanied only by his orderly, he had extended as far as Jarny. He had encountered the enemy nowhere but brought back a French prisoner whom he had taken as a straggler and whose chassepot rifle interested us much as it was the first we had seen. The good fellow also brought a wagon load of government cigars, which did not, however, taste good at all to us; they were distributed among the troops, whose advance guard (3d Infantry Regiment No. 102) was advanced to beyond the

Metz road. Unfortunately Prince George in the evening was seized with a violent neuralgic headache and I went to bed troubled in my mind on that account, for there was no doubt but what we would have to fight our first battle with the enemy the next day. But our spirits were high with hope.

At 5 a.m., August 18, our headquarters was called to the bivouac of our army corps, whose two divisions camped close together, and here verbally received orders from Prince Frederick Charles for the movements for the day, orders which our Crown Prince enlarged on and explained with his usual tranquility and clearness. It was still not definitely known where the enemy would be found. According to some reports he was in front of Metz, others stated that he intended to march in a large circle past us from Metz to Paris. Therefore General von Moltke had directed the execution of an advance with a broad front, directly northward; this march to be made with three army corps—the IXth, Guard and XIIth Corps—in the first line; the IIIrd and Xth Corps in the second line. The enemy was to be attacked wherever found. Thus a decisive battle could be counted on with certainty. We rejoiced at this, although we wondered why we Saxons were drawn from the center to the extreme left wing, which necessitated crossing with the Guard Corps on our left. We felt that we were to be cheated of our chance to participate in the impending battle and that the Guards were given the preference. However, at such moments there is but little time for guess-work, and it behooves each to obey everything with his best efforts.

The army corps massed itself in battle formation south of Mars la Tour in two parallel columns and, crossing the village, started with its advance guard at 6.45 a.m. This advance guard consisted of the Rifle Regiment, the 1st Cavalry Regiment and the 2d Light Battery Westmann, which latter I had commanded (it being then the 3d) from 1861 to 1865 as captain. It received direction on Jarny. Captain von Treitschke was attached to General von Craushaar who commanded the advance guard. It was a glorious summer morning, followed by a clear day and not too hot.

After we had passed Mars la Tour and the mass of the Guard Corps, which had waited for our passing, we halted; the rifles were loaded and the colors unfurled amidst cheers. For the first time we saw the entire army corps, with the exception of the cavalry division, assembled in full strength, and when the bands commenced playing their inspiring marches confidence and the lust of battle filled every one's heart. The military spirit of our advance was increased when we passed the battlefield where the bloody cavalry charges had taken place on August 16. The corpses of riders and horses were still lying unburied and had to be stepped over by our battalions, which must have shaken the nerves of many of our young soldiers who had never seen such a sight. We saw the brave riders lying as death had overtaken them, most of them with their saber in their right hand, many with gaping wounds on the head and upper part of the body. Prince George, who fortunately was entirely well again, rode with his staff in front of the 46th Brigade and, toward 9 a.m., reached the vicinity of Jarny where a longer halt was made to await reports from the advance guard, whose cavalry reconnoitered in the north toward Valleroy and occupied Conflans. The 24th Division kept on our right and halted at Ferme Château Moncel. Here several hours passed in waiting, while our staff, expecting further orders from the Crown Prince who had also ridden to Jarny, remained sitting in the ditch alongside the road. According to the old soldier rule that we have to eat and sleep whenever we have a chance so to do, we partook of breakfast, and after it I slept a short hour, my head on the lap of our honored chief surgeon of the division, Pohland; for during the past few nights sleep had been out of the question.

Finally the march could be resumed. The advance guard had reported that the enemy stood about an hour's march in front of us at Moineville and on our right in Ste. Marie aux Chênes. Thereupon the Crown Prince ordered the divisions to march against these two points, one division on each. The 23d Division received the former direction. Our orders read: to advance with the 45th Brigade northward toward Tichémont and to occupy the forest of Ponty, while

the 24th Division turns to the half right and marches on Ste. Marie aux Chênes. The 46th Brigade was to be the reserve. At exactly 12 noon our division started the march in the direction ordered and at 12.30 p.m. we had hardly crossed the railroad to Verdun which was then still under construction when we were surprised by hearing the thunder of cannon on our right and thus gained the conviction that the enemy had been found in an entirely unexpected direction. Following our orders, the 45th Brigade occupied the forest of Ponty which was in our front and which proved to be very dense with very few roads. This occupation was executed with probably unnecessary thoroughness and conscientiousness, as it was soon seen that the forest was unoccupied.

The Prince halted with his staff between Tichémont and Fleury on the southwestern side of the forest. The thunder of cannon on our right was steadily increasing in volume as between 1.30 and 1.45 p.m. there arrived in quick succession two reports which finally cleared up for us the condition with the enemy. Our advance guard had merely reported that the first report that Moineville was occupied by the enemy was erroneous. These new reports showed that we were on the very best road to get nowhere. First, Captain von Hodenberg¹ reported that the enemy was at St. Privat, and, a few minutes later an orderly officer of the Guard Corps galloped up with the more definite report that the thunder of cannon on our right was caused by a battle raging the other side of the forest of Vernéville and that a French camp, estimated at one division, was in our right front at Ste. Marie aux Chênes and that the 1st Guard Division had started the march at 12 noon from Doncourt toward Anoux la Grange. He stated at the same time that French troops, which had been under canvas at St. Privat and Roncourt, were now marching toward Vernéville and that only weak, hostile infantry detachments had shown themselves between Batilly and Ste. Marie. He thereupon rode away to look up our Crown Prince, but said before he went that it was the intention that the left wing, which we formed, should not

¹Later on for a number of years Adjutant General of His Majesty King Albert, finally commander of the 2d Division No. 24. Died as General of Infantry, active list, in 1903.

press forward too much, and that the decision lay on the right wing!

Prince George considered these reports so important that he on his part sent Captain von Hodenberg with them to the Crown Prince.¹ The latter thereupon issued the following orders at 2 p.m. at the east corner of the forest of Ponty:

“The 1st Division (23d), which will now again have the disposition of the 2d Brigade (46th) in position behind the west corner of the forest of Ponty, will take direction through Coinville and the small wood east of Auboué and advance on the position at Roncourt.”

In the meantime Prince George, knowing that the 24th Division had marched off at 12 noon toward Ste. Marie aux Chênes, had arrived at the independent decision, as soon as the Prussian orderly officer had left, of abandoning occupation of the forest of Ponty and of marching through Batilly toward Ste. Marie aux Chênes, in order to operate, if possible, against the hostile right flank. As happened so frequently in this war, he thereby anticipated the very same orders of the commanding general, as did the Crown Prince in the same manner with Prince Frederick Charles, his superior commander. Thus the independent measures taken by the higher commanders, based on simultaneously correct estimates of the situation, reacted upon one another as the cogs of a machine, and, if success was not attained as smoothly as in peace maneuvers, the causes of this are attributable only to the friction of the war machine and the individualities of the subordinate commanders.

To carry out his decisions the Prince for the present had of course only six companies of the Body Guard Regiment and the division artillery at his disposal, while the other six companies and the 2d Grenadier Regiment had to be first brought from the forest of Ponty and then assembled

¹ Note by the editor Hans von Schubert.—The report has been copied from the Saxon War Archives in the *Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik* published by the Great General Staff, vol. V, p. 168 (1907). Did not the orders of the Crown Prince based thereon leave only *after* 2 p.m.? This in view of the fact that report thereof to army headquarters was made only at 2.30 p.m., and that the orders arrived at Headquarters of the 23d Division only at 2.45 p.m. and that headquarters was but a short distance away. (P. 247 et seq., *ante*.)

again. The Rifle Regiment was with the advance guard. As has been stated before, the entire 46th Brigade under Colonel von Montbé had been retained at the disposition of corps headquarters in the vicinity of Jarny. After all necessary orders had been issued I rode at the head of the 6th Company of the Body Guard Regiment past Batilly on the west and, north of the village, ascended a ridge which gave a wide outlook and spread the entire battlefield before our eyes. Here Hussars of the Guards stood as extreme left observation post of their corps.

In our front, about 2,000 meters off, on the other side of the basin, was situated the village of Ste. Marie aux Chênes, large, solidly built, enclosed with walls and hedges; on the other side of it, about 15 minutes march from there, rose a gradually ascending, open, glacis-like slope, crowned on its top by the imposing, fortress-like village of St. Privat. To its right and left the edge of the plateau continues evenly and entirely open, and there we perceived the French in strong position with a numerous artillery. As we saw it, the French line on the left extended to the village of Roncourt, a mile distant; on the right even farther, interrupted by some few farms, until it finally was hidden from our sight in the distance. On our left wing ran a rolling, partly wooded terrain down to the Orne valley from which we saw our Rifle Regiment marching against Ste. Marie aux Chênes to which point it had been directed by General von Craushaar on his own responsibility when he found no enemy on the Orne. We perceived a hot battle raging on the south side of Ste. Marie aux Chênes, evidently carried on by the Prussian Guards, while the Saxon columns approached that point from three directions: nearest the Guards parts of our 24th Division coming from St. Ail; then, from Batilly, our own 45th Brigade, what we had of it together, accompanied by the divisional artillery; and from the Orne valley, the head of our advance guard, formed by the 3d Rifle Battalion. At this moment the Prince received orders, I do not know from whom, to support the attack of the Guards on the village by his artillery. Accordingly the 1st Light Battery Legnick received orders to advance on Ste. Marie, while the remaining

divisional batteries went into position on the ridge north of Batilly, where we stood. At exactly 2.30 p.m. the battery Legnick, which had very decisively advanced to within 1,500 paces of the village, fired the first round, with which our (the 23d Division's) interference in the bloody battle commenced. The 24th Division had commenced its action some time before this.

Only about this time, 2.45 p.m., did the above mentioned orders of the Crown Prince reach Prince George, directing him to envelop the hostile right wing, which touched the village of Roncourt, with the 23d Division through Auboué and the woods on our left, and for this purpose again have the disposition of its 46th Brigade. The division could at once have started the movement, had it been together, especially if the 46th Brigade had not been at that time about one hour behind us. And the 1st Brigade, No. 45, was not assembled for some time, and thus we had to contain ourselves in patience. As place of assembly for his dispersed forces the Prince designated the ravine at Coinville, one mile on our left, and for a time our staff were able, unmolested by hostile fire, to watch the battle around Ste. Marie aux Chênes, in which very soon our 3d Rifle Battalion also participated. Surrounded and attacked from three sides, the French had to evacuate this advanced post toward 3.30 p.m. and from then on confine themselves to the defense of their main position 2,000 meters in rear. The Guards and the 47th Infantry Brigade (Major General von Leonhardi) of our 2d Infantry Division occupied Ste. Marie aux Chênes, and our corps artillery, under Colonel Funcke, went into position to the left (north) of the village, taking up with the hostile artillery between St. Privat and Roncourt a battle which gradually took the shape of a grand artillery duel.

In the meantime Prince George and his staff had proceeded to the assembly place at Coinville where our different bodies of troops arrived greatly trying our patience by their slowness. This assembly had not been unperceived by the enemy and one of his batteries threw shells on us which however had but small effect. Most of them passed high above us and their smoke followed them in the shape of

smoking white cloudlets through the air. As it appeared necessary to clear the road assigned to the division of the enemy whose troops emerged from Roncourt, the leading battalion of the Rifle Regiment received orders to take possession of the small piece of woods extending as far as Roncourt. Thus very soon a hot forest battle ensued, in which the regiment soon gained ground and thereby enabled the corps artillery to advance farther to the front. This also enabled us to move the assembly point of the division about a mile farther forward east of Ferme Grimoneau, where the enemy could not see us and where thus we had better protection.

The Prince and his staff remained on the hill not far from the left wing of our corps artillery which gradually turned more to the right and apparently gained the fire superiority. My friends, Hoch and Hammer, were carried past me, wounded, as well as Major Allmer of the Rifle Regiment. Though our headquarters were a good 2,000 meters from St. Privat some stray chassepot bullets struck in our midst and the horse of Lieutenant Schmalz of the 1st Cavalry Regiment, the orderly officer of General von Craushaar, was killed alongside of me by receiving a bullet in its shoulderblade.

At about 4.30 p.m. Lieutenant Müller von Berneck of corps headquarters arrived and reported to Prince George that the enveloping of the hostile right wing was to be made along larger lines and that for that purpose the still intact 48th Infantry Brigade of the 24th Division would be placed under his orders. This was the more welcome as our 46th Brigade had not yet arrived and as we could not have executed the envelopment with assured success with our 45th Brigade alone. The 46th Brigade had been drawn deeper and deeper into the fight for the above mentioned woods, in which the French attempted to gain a firm foothold and in front of which they stood in force. Thus the decision of the Crown Prince, arrived at independently, was most fortunate; else the enveloping movement would have started half an hour later than it actually did. It was already 5 p.m. when the 48th Infantry Brigade under Colonel von Schulz finally

arrived and was instructed and when the decisive movement could commence. Two roads for that movement were open to us. It could be executed as an envelopment of the hostile wing by our marching through the woods at Auboué direct against Roncourt—even though we thereby described a larger arc, or it could be made as a complete turning movement by our marching in the deep valley of the Orne under cover to opposite Joeuf, there ascending the side of the valley near the village of Montois la Montagne and then turning to the right against the flank and rear of the enemy. The latter road was the longest, but would have better decisive effect, and I succeeded in persuading the Prince to take it. For the turning movement the 48th Infantry Brigade was designated, the 1st Cavalry Regiment and the two heavy and two light batteries of the division attached to it. Captain von Treitschke, to whom I showed on the map which road he was to take, was placed in command of the column. Finally, it was agreed that the 48th Brigade, as soon as it arrived at Montois, should let its batteries open fire and that upon this signal General von Craushaar should advance frontally on Roncourt with the 45th Brigade.¹

Now came three quarters of an hour of waiting in great tension, during which our corps artillery, which in a certain sense formed the supporting point of our envelopment, opened an annihilating fire against the village of Roncourt, throwing a veritable rain of projectiles on it. A dense cloud of smoke cut off the view when the artillery battle reached its climax. The hostile artillery between Roncourt and St. Privat retired and concentrated more around St. Privat. Finally, toward 5.45 p.m., the eagerly awaited

¹The orders issued by me for this movement are reprinted in the General Staff Account, vol. II, p. 768.—General von Hodenberg is in error in stating (in *Wissenschaftliche Beilage* to the *Leipziger Zeitung* No. 44, 1898) that the details of the envelopment through the valley of the Orne were ordered by the Crown Prince.—(Note by the Editor, Hans von Schubert: A communication in Prince George's own handwriting states expressly that the orders for the extended envelopment through Montois did not originate with the commanding general, but were his own special orders. As Abendroth's regiment belonged to the enveloping column on the left, while Funke commanded the corps artillery on the right, these three, friends from their youth, were here together for decisive action.)

moment arrived when the dark masses of our enveloping column appeared in view coming from the valley at Montois. Shortly after the thunder of its artillery was heard, The columns of the 48th Infantry Brigade advanced in part on Roncourt and in part turned to the left against the woods bounding the valley of the Mosel towards the quarries of Jaumont. The time for our advance had now also arrived. Though we had been twelve hours on horseback we all felt as though electrified. In the best of order the two Grenadier regiments, deployed in battle formation, advanced alongside each other frontally against Roncourt, while the skirmishers on the left continued to clean out the forest. My Prince insisted on riding ahead of the 45th Brigade on the heights of Soutiens, and when I took the liberty of pointing out the danger he ran, he gave the princely reply: "In the first battle I belong at the head of my Division." His calmness and coolness were remarkable and set the men a shining example. The nearest companies broke out in cheers when they heard his reply¹ and I have to own that at this moment my heart was filled with the highest military enthusiasm. The hostile skirmish lines in our front retreated from our advancing lines without offering any material resistance into Roncourt and beyond it. From the insignia of a dead French soldier we learned that we had the French 6th Corps opposed to us, under the renowned Marshal Canrobert who was no mean opponent according to the reputation he then had.

The distance to Roncourt, 4000 paces, was covered without our suffering great losses. Captain Erwin von Minckwitz, our division adjutant and a very brave soldier, undertook the feat of charging under fire to the very entrance of Roncourt where he ascertained that the enemy had left the village, very probably in consequence of the effective fire of our corps artillery. The village was immediately occupied by one company of the Rifle Regiment and two of the Grenadier Regiment, while the remainder of the 45th Brigade turned against St. Privat. It was 6.30 p.m. when the whole

¹Note by Hans von Schubert.—This moment has been handed down to posterity by the well known battle painter, Lieutenant Colonel von Götz, which shows Captain von Zeschau, at the head of his company, cheering the Prince. The author is seen on the painting immediately behind the Prince.

horror of a large decisive battle spread out. Our staff halted in front of the entrance to Roncourt, which village was under a perfect hail of hostile projectiles from St. Privat, 1000 paces distant. The terrain as far as St. Privat proved to be here also a naked, gradually ascending slope on which several field walls, in parallel lines and rising one above the other like terraces, formed just so many defensive lines strongly occupied by French infantry. A few batteries in position in front of St. Privat and the forest poured a very heavy fire on our advancing columns. One shell exploded in our immediate rear in a dense mass of men without, however, doing any damage. I well remember the droll incident of the Prince's servant, Liebsch, who rode behind the Prince and suddenly called out loud to him. When we turned around, he held his left hand up and showed us that he held only the ends of four bridle reins, a shell having cut them clean through.

To be entirely truthful I have to own up that from now on direction of the battle on the part of headquarters ceased. The 45th and 48th Brigades had become mixed and there were even troops of the Guards among them. Every individual, instinctively and filled with battle lust, pressed toward the battle objective, the village of St. Privat, which, enveloped in smoke like a volcano, partly itself in flames, was the center of a veritable furnace place. The furies of war had been unchained and the achievements of the individual now took the place of the previous higher leadership. We still had to live a heavy hour to 7.30 p.m. Our headquarters remained halfway between Roncourt and St. Privat and from there was a spectator of the final imposing drama when, at the moment of the decisive charge, 50,000 Germans pressed into the village in this horrible battle noise, thunder of cannon, sounding of trumpets and bugles, beating of drums and shouting at the top of their voices. The capture of that village was the decision of the battle there. The setting sun shone bloodred on this giant battle. Our 46th Brigade, which had come up in the meantime, stood deployed and in readiness to renew the attack, in case the Grenadiers were defeated; but that did not become necessary and the

knowledge that we had gained a great victory and had interfered materially in the battle took possession of our souls and filled us with glad pride.

Here, at the fall of dusk, we met the Crown Prince and his staff and congratulated him. While the hand to hand fight with the retreating French still raged within the village the necessary steps were taken to harass the fleeing enemy as much as possible. The corps artillery again went into position at the exit of the village of St. Privat and engaged the hostile artillery which had taken a new position some few thousand paces distant at the quarries of Amanvillers. Complete darkness had set in when the last shots were fired and the bloody day's work was finished.

There could be no thought of bringing order into the masses which filled the dark terrain. Every one remained lying where he had last fought and we also sought in the nearby Roncourt for a sleeping place which we finally found in a saloon after I had requested a number of Brunswickers, who had been pushed ahead of the Xth Corps and therefore had not participated greatly in the battle, to vacate the premises for us.

Physical condition now made its desires felt. Fortunately we found a large can of native wine in the cellar and then we searched our pockets for scraps of food. These small rests made dinner and supper for us as for the Prince also. We found a bed for him at least; the rest of us lay down on straw in the saloon. I had placed a guard, taken from the nearest organization, in the hall of the house and thus we slept without apprehension. In the middle of the night Prince George von Schönburg, adjutant of our Crown Prince, arrived and I shared my sleeping place with him—as he had done with me the night before Königgrätz.

Thus ended the great day which had been the first victorious day for the Saxon arms for a long, long time.

The day after the battle shows the reverse of the medal. The ardor had disappeared and given place to cold calculation. We counted our losses and found that our division had a loss of 717 killed and wounded, among them 32 officers. We deeply lamented the death of General von Craushaar, who

had been killed by a bullet in the head in the charge on the village of St. Privat. Just two hours previous to that, when we started, he had offered me a cigar which I declined with thanks. His jovial disposition, eager for battle, and his excellent leadership had pleased me greatly. The Prince had heard that he would be buried at 9 o'clock in Ste. Marie and therefore rode with me to that place, our road leading across the field over which the Guards had attacked. It was a sorrowful ride. The entire space between St. Privat and Ste. Marie was covered with the corpses of the brave, strong men who had known no falling back. It was especially painful to hear the calls of a number of dying and wounded lying there still unattended—and we could not help them. The sanitary soldiers had stuck each man's rifle bayonet in the ground alongside of the wounded, so as to find them easily, and such marks numbered into the hundreds as far as we could see. At the church in Ste. Marie we met Lieutenant Schmalz¹ General von Craushaar's adjutant, and a number of Saxon soldiers who had constructed a coffin out of rough boards. Deeply moved we buried the brave general. A handful of earth was the last sign of honor we could give him.

All houses in Ste. Marie were filled to overflowing with wounded and we had great difficulty in locating the house in which Major Moritz Allmer of the Rifle Regiment lay. He had received a bullet through the left shoulder into the breast and appeared to be beyond hope. He well recognized his condition, for he gave me his last will and testament. The tear which crushed between his lids showed me how unwilling this brave man was to leave this life.

The return ride over the battlefield was as sorrowful as the going. With the consent of the Prince I killed the wounded horse of a Guard officer with my revolver. It was a fine English mare, whose nose had been shot off by a shell and was standing with hanging head, slowly bleeding to death. It took five or six shots in the head to bring it to the ground. There was much to do in the line of writing on my return to Roncourt so that I had not even time to look up

¹Later on (until 1901) commandant of Dresden, now (1892) Lieutenant General, retired, and lives in Gönsdorf near Dresden.

my wounded friend Abendroth who was somewhere in the village. He had carried himself, as was to be expected, bravely and efficiently in the special battle which he conducted at the forest of Jaumont for the protection of our left flank.

The opinion was held at Royal Headquarters that the beaten enemy might possibly attempt this afternoon to cut his way through in the valley of the Mosel going through Marange to Montmédy. Therefore our division, which had already sent the 46th Infantry Brigade into the valley of the Mosel early in the morning, had to take up, right after 12 noon, a position in readiness between Roncourt and the forest of Jaumont; but the enemy did not appear. At 6 p.m. we received orders to start to the valley of the Orne and go into close quarters there. Thus we again traversed the battlefield, from which the wounded had by that time been removed, in the direction of Ste. Marie, where the columns of the Guard Corps crossed ours and caused us a long delay. When crossing the road behind Ste. Marie I had the misfortune to see my brave horse *Mücke* who had carried himself excellently the day before in battle, get his hind hoof entangled in a telegraph wire lying on the ground, and almost entirely cut a tendon in the joint. With great difficulty I bandaged the wound with my dressing package and then, tying my horse to a provision wagon belonging to the battalion under Captain Hager, rode myself on the wagon in the midst of the columns as far as Hatrize in the Orne valley which we finally reached at midnight. Here the Prince had obtained good quarters of the village priest and I well remember how good his camomille tea tasted that night. It seemed that the priest's cook knew no other kind of tea. Our field mail service, which the day before had found nothing to do, had now found time to open up business and so I had the joy of receiving letters from my wife dated August 2 and 8. An order also was received from the Crown Prince heartily thanking the army corps for its achievements on August 18.

August 20 we had a day of rest in Hatrize, well earned after the exertions of the past eight days. It was a welcome event to be able to sleep an entire night in a bed without

being disturbed. I welcomed this rest; for my feet had become so sore that I could hardly walk. The priest's cook made me a present of a pair of stockings of incredible length and gave me an opportunity of having my underclothes washed—one of the greatest difficulties in war. I had much writing to do on this day; report of the battle, war diary, letters home, and many other things.

A retrospect of the events of the last few days on which the Germans had been victorious August 14, 16 and 18, caused us to think that political negotiations would now be taken up and that the fighting would soon cease.

What an error! And still it would have been the wisest thing the French could have done, as the future showed. But whom the Lord would chastise he first strikes blind.

Field Notes

The following is a translation (from a photographic reproduction) of the notes contained on two and one-half pages of the note book of Lieutenant Colonel von Schubert invariably carried on his person during the campaign of 1870-71 and in which he jotted down, during all engagements, notes of the progress of the engagement, orders, etc. The notes, hastily jotted down with a pencil, on horseback, narrate in very brief form all moments of the battle of September 1:

- - - - -
- 5.10 Arrival of alarm order.
 - 5.30 Departure of orderly officers.
 - 6 Arrival of orderly officers.
 - 8 Head in front of Douzy.
 - 8.45 Saw flash—
The 46th Inf. Reg. (read Brigade) goes through the forest
defile la Rulle with the 2 batt(eries.)
 - 9.45 Garten occupies the sector and right of the road.
 - 10 Critical moment—
1 Batt. 4th Reg. (No. 103), 1st and 2d Co.
Bugler
Rifle regiment sent ahead.
Garten left to on the road.
 - 10.45 Start of the Brigade Garten for the march to Moncelle.
 - 11.45 Orders, to fall back on Illy.
 - 12.30 Start of the march; (batteries under) v. Leonhardi and Legnick go into position under protection of the Rifle Regiment.
 - 1 Catastrophe at Daigny.
 - 1.15 Deploying.
 - 1.45 The 1st Brigade passed Klüx and divers battalions, 3d Batt. II (Grenadier Regiment No. 101); I-100; $\frac{1}{2}$ I-101.
 - 2.15 Renewed start via Haybes 1 Bn. 100. as cover; 3 Bns. 101. above Klüx 2 h(alf) Bn. 101 Schimpff.
 - 4 2d going into position of artillery other side of defile.
 - 4.30 Last (offensive of enemy and therewith) conclusion (of battle. Last shots) on single batteries fleeing out of Sedan and batteries gone into position.

Crown Prince Albert and Prince George of Saxony on August 18th, 1870¹

BY

PAUL HAAKE

DURING 1898 and 1899 Freiherr von Hodenberg, General of Infantry, reserve list, in a series of articles in the Scientific Supplement of the *Leipziger Zeitung*, pictured and emphasized "The Initiative of King Albert in the Campaign of 1870-71," and (in Supplement No. 44, April 16, 1898) "The Leadership of the XIIth Corps at Gravelotte—St. Privat la Montagne, August 18, 1870."

Searching and exact inquiry, based on the archives, will, I believe, confirm in all material points the correctness of the excellent account of this able officer (who participated in the Franco-German War as captain on the headquarters staff of Crown Prince Albert and who thus was an eyewitness of the latter's actions and decisions); and its agreement with the opinions of Colonel von Schimpff, as expressed in his captivating work "*König Albert, 50 Jahre Soldat*," (Dresden 1894) and "*Das XII Korps im Kriege 1870-71*, I, *St. Privat la Montagne*" (Dresden 1901).

In the following pages I shall reproduce a few authentic documents which I was graciously permitted by the Director of the Royal Saxon Archives, Lieutenant-Colonel Hottenroth, to copy from the archives, and shall at the same time take issue with the latest published accounts of the advance of the Saxons on Ste. Marie aux Chênes, Roncourt and St. Privat. Unfortunately, "The 18th of August 1870," published by the Historical Section of the Great General Staff in Berlin in 1906 as volume 5 of *Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik* (Studies in Military History and Tactics), leaves much to be desired as regards completeness and accuracy—as I learned from the documents in the Dresden War

¹From *Neues Archiv für Sächsische Geschichte und Altertumskunde*—Vol. XXXIII, Parts 1 and 2, 1912.

Archives; and the criticisms of it, published by two Saxon officers in the *Leipziger Zeitung*¹ are very probably unknown to most historians. Otherwise Frederick Regensberg could not have said on page 89, vol. 2 of his work on the Franco-Prussian War "represented and based on the very latest sources of information" published in 1910:

"This most excellent work of the General Staff treating of the 18th of August, the material of which it took long years of labor to collate, brings the inquiries concerning the battle to a close and gives a captivating picture, true in the most minute details, of the battle, the account being clear, the language excellent, and each line indicating endeavor to state the full truth and to give proper credit to friend and foe equally."

Though myself a Prussian reserve officer, I must as a conscientious historian, agree with the two Saxon critics that the part the Saxons played in the success of St. Privat and the independent power of decision of their leader are not sufficiently emphasized and recognized by the Great General Staff. To make good this defect, by means of the material furnished by the archives, is the purpose of the following pages. The commander of the Prussian 1st Guard Infantry Division, General von Pape, considered it a comrade's duty three weeks after the battle of Sedan to praise, in a detailed report to headquarters of the Guard Corps, the excellent achievements of the Saxon troops, who so energetically and successfully supported their Prussian comrades in arms on August 18, and September 1.² For us who have come later

¹Scientific Supplements 11 and 29, March 16, and July 20, 1907, respectively:—"The 18th of August 1870" (one signed "—r" and the other by Colonel von Kretschmar). In 1870 the latter was a first lieutenant and adjutant to the commander of the artillery and—as I was personally able to ascertain—not only kept an exact daily record of events during the campaign, but also marked at the very time and place the positions of the Saxon batteries on a map which he carried with him and which he still has in his possession; and the statements contained in the above mentioned book by the Great General Staff differ materially from these notes and marks.

²Gonesse, September 24, 1870, copy. (Royal Saxon War Archives, Box 505, b20, Campaign 1871, Document No. 5b, battle reports and statements of the battle of Sedan, September 1, 1870). In connection with this it may be remarked that it is much to be wished that all military historians should follow scientific methods in citing documents and proofs. Unfortunately most historians, particularly those of the historical section of the Great General Staff, merely state in which they found the paper or document, but not the exact place, and thereby make verification very difficult.

it is even more a duty to give every one due credit; it is our task to give historical truth full victory; not in order to revive disputes which were alive 40 years ago, but to settle them finally and definitely.

As is well known, the Saxon Army Corps (XIIth), commanded by Crown Prince Albert, belonged at the outbreak of the war to the Second Army, under Prince Frederick Charles of Prussia, which, in conjunction with the First Army under General von Steinmetz, pushed back Marshal Bazaine to and beyond Metz. Marching about the center of the Second Army the XIIth Corps crossed the Mosel August 16th, at Pont à Mousson and, at 12 noon, like all other corps, received orders from Frederick Charles to continue the forward movement in a westerly direction and to reach the Meuse at Bannancourt August 18th.¹ But the battle ensuing at Vionville—Mars la Tour on the 16th brought about a change in these dispositions. Captain von Klenck of the Saxon Guard cavalry regiment, who arrived on the battlefield at 6 p.m. in search of the 5th Cavalry Division, received from the commanding general of the Xth Army Corps, von Voigts-Rhetz, a note, which was later countersigned by Prince Frederick Charles, to the effect that it was desirable for all available forces to concentrate at daybreak the 17th at Tronville.² Five hours later Headquarters Second Army sent direct orders to the XIIth Corps to march during the night by way of Thiaucourt to Mars la Tour and, if possible, to take position in readiness at sunrise behind the Xth Corps in bivouac there.³ According to the Great General Staff account⁴ the preliminaries for this movement ordered by Prince Frederick Charles were carefully prepared by both the XIIth and the Guard Corps "and mainly according to directions from Royal Headquarters." Saxon headquarters ordered the start for the battlefield for 3 a.m. Therefore Crown Prince Albert issued orders as early as 9.30 p.m. to

¹Von der Goltz, *Feldzug 1870-71. Die Operationen der II Armee*, page 74 (Berlin 1873).

²Von der Goltz, page 106, Note.— Von Klenck, *Kriegstagebuch der 1. Eskadron des Gardereiter Regiments 1870-71.*—(Page 105, ante)

³Von der Goltz, page 105.

⁴*Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik*, Vol. 5, pp. 18 & 19.

the 12th Cavalry Division to start at 4 a.m. from Vigneulles through Harville toward the Metz—Etain road. The 23d Infantry Division received orders at 10.15 p.m. to start with its advance guard at 3 a.m. from Thiaucourt toward Mars la Tour. The 24th Infantry Division was to march at the same time from Pont à Mousson. The Corps artillery was to follow the 23d Division. Special praise for initiative is given only to the commander of the latter division, Prince George, younger brother of the Crown Prince.

"In the 23d Division," says the Great General Staff, "independent action had been taken before these orders arrived. Upon the arrival of Captain von Klenck the division commander, Prince George of Saxony, had already ordered the advance guard of the division to start at once for Thiaucourt and the main body to be in readiness about midnight at Regniéville en Haye, when orders arrived from Crown Prince Albert and postponed the start of the main body until 3 a.m.¹ But the information which Prince George sent to the neighboring Guard Corps as to his intended start² caused that corps to be in readiness at Richecourt and Flirey at 5 a.m. for a forward march northward. Thus the orders from Headquarters Second Army, arriving during the night, found the XIIth and the Guard Corps well prepared."

There can be no doubt that by these measures Prince George excellently anticipated the orders which were shortly afterwards to reach him; the procedure of Crown Prince Albert—to judge at least from the cited account—appears neither so suitable nor so independent; some may even read in the Great General Staff account a slight criticism of the Saxon corps commander's slowness in issuing his orders, when, as a matter of fact, in the carrying out of the wishes of Royal Headquarters he deserves hardly less credit than his younger brother. Let us hear what he himself says, in his diary of the Campaign of 1870-71 which, written in

¹Lieutenant General Gustav von Schubert—chief of staff of the 23d Division in the first weeks of the campaign—states in his *Lebenserinnerungen*, edited by Hans von Schubert from posthumous papers, Stuttgart & Leipzig, 1909, pp. 191-2: "As it was incredibly dark, it took a long time to assemble the division from its scattered villages and bivouacs, and the march could not be started until toward 3 a.m. August 17th." Schubert makes no mention at all of the orders of the Crown Prince, which designated that hour as the time of starting. (Page 403-4 ante.)

²"—— in conjunction with the results of a reconnaissance made from Guard Corps Headquarters——" Omitted here by Haake with no indication of omission.—Ed.

the Crown Prince's own hand, stands today as one of the most valuable documents of the Saxon War Archives.¹ Prince Albert notes on August 16 and 17 the following:

"16th. March to Pont a Mousson. I had the entire 23d (Division) cross on the ponton bridge, the 24th on the permanent bridge. At noon rumors reached the city of the fight of the III^d Corps. I sent little Planitz² ahead to reconnoiter. While at tea with the King (William) I learned that the affair was serious and decided to start for Metz, though I had orders to march to the Meuse on the 17th. At first I intended to start at 5 a.m.; Holleben³ who arrived from the front, as well the reports from George⁴ (through Klenck) that the situation at noon was serious, caused me to order the start to be made at 3 a.m. An order arriving at 1.30 a.m. from Fritz Karl⁵ induced me to have the 24th Div. alarmed at once. I rode off at 1.30. The march to Mars la Tour was very fatiguing. Fortunately there was no fight. I had the 23d Div. bivouac at Mars la Tour, the 24th at Puxieux. I had sent out the cavalry division to the Metz—Etain road, where it was to harass the possible retreat of the enemy on Verdun. I remained in Puxieux, after having informed myself as to the situation at headquarters of the Xth Corps."

Does not this sound as though Crown Prince Albert had taken his measures for the main part on his own responsibility; as though he had independently arrived at the idea of marching toward the Meuse not in a westerly, but northerly direction to bring assistance to the endangered Brandenburgers and Hanoverians; at least as though Moltke's orders to start at 3 a.m. in the direction of Thiaucourt—Mars la Tour had been in consonance with his own decision? Even if it be said that the initiative of the Crown Prince in this

¹The events from the departure from Dresden up to and including August 17th evidently were written at one sitting; those of the 18th, 19th and 20th August, in some lighter colored ink, the same; and so on up to the second half of September; but without doubt very soon after each event occurred; in front of Paris the Crown Prince lost interest in continuing the diary and added about 25 lines toward the end of January, 1871, the last sentence of which reads: "This was the commencement of the siege of Paris, which we believed would be short, but which has continued for 4½ months."

²Captain Edler von der Planitz, then on the staff of the Crown Prince, later Minister of War.

³Major Freiherr von Holleben, called Normann, in 1870 detailed to the Prussian General Staff and in the first weeks of the campaign attached to Royal Headquarters.

⁴Prince George of Saxony, brother of the Crown Prince.

⁵Prince Frederick Charles of Prussia, commander-in-chief of the Second Army. For his orders issued in Gorze at 11 p.m. see Von der Goltz, p. 104.

matter was but small,¹ one thing is certain: he gave his cavalry division even more far reaching orders than Royal Headquarters had thought necessary; namely, that his troopers were to reach not only the road leading through Mars la Tour and Fresnes to Verdun, but also that leading to Verdun through Jarney, Conflans, Puxe, St. Jean les Buzy and Etain, blocking that road so as to delay or interfere with a possible retreat of the enemy. Half an hour after midnight Crown Prince Albert personally directed Lieutenant von Trebra—whom the division commander, Count Lippe, had sent to Pont à Mousson with a report—to ride at breakneck speed and tell Count Lippe that the division was to make as much noise as practicable² during its advance. While German Royal Headquarters is justly blamed for not having caused sufficient cavalry reconnaissances to be made on August 17 and for losing touch with the enemy almost entirely, that criticism cannot be made of Crown Prince Albert; the commander of the 12th Corps and its troopers performed their duties on the 17th to the fullest extent and, even if they could not locate the enemy, made certain that the main part of Bazaine's army had not yet gotten away toward the west, at least not along the roads occupied by the Saxons.³

Count Lippe passed the night of August 17-18 with his division in the vicinity of St. Jean les Buzy and Parfondrupt. Of the two Saxon infantry divisions: the 23d camped at Mars

¹He arrived at his decision undoubtedly during conversation with others who brought discouraging news from Vionville to Royal Headquarters, and especially during his conversation with King William and Moltke, who subsequently verbally directed him at 9.30 o'clock to have the XIIth Corps start at 3 a.m.

²War Archives, box 539, No. 152. Supplements to battle reports 1870-71. Dresden, 15, January, 1873, Count Lippe to Captain Freiherr von Hodenberg, Great General Staff, Berlin.

³At 7 p.m., August 17, Lieutenant von Hinüber brought three captured Frenchmen, who were making their way toward Metz, to Puxieux; one was the secretary of finance Marquis de Marguerie, the second a merchant and the third an officer's servant of the 51st Regiment of the Line. These supposed spies he delivered two hours later in Buxières at Headquarters Second Army, and on his return at 10 p.m. in Puxieux reported to Count Lippe that Prince Frederick Charles had expressed great gratification at the achievements of the Saxon troopers, stating: "I had to recount to his Royal Highness the march of our cavalry division and he looked upon it as a great achievement."—War Archives, Box 539, No. 152.

la Tour, the 24th to the south at Puxieux. Crown Prince Albert, as we learn, had his headquarters in the latter village. On the German side it was expected with certainty that contact with the enemy would be renewed the following day and opinions differed only as to the place where he would have to be sought. Moltke believed it more probable that he had retreated on Metz, but made arrangements for both contingencies, i.e., of having to fight fronting either north or east, and consequently ordered the Second Army to start at 5 a.m., August 18 by echelon from the left wing. Prince Frederick Charles was firmly convinced that Bazaine had withdrawn his main force to the north or northwest to march into the interior of France through Conflans or Briey, while a smaller part formed a sort of rear guard on the heights west of Metz; and this conviction he expressed in the directions he gave to the commanding generals of his five army corps on the morning of August 18.¹

"It is difficult to state," said he, "where the enemy may be found. He is supposed to have been marching off toward evening on both roads in our front towards Conflans. A bivouac of three divisions, observed yesterday at Gravelotte, also probably has marched off. If that is not the case, General Steinmetz will attack there. The advance will be made not in long, thin march columns, but by divisions massed, the two infantry brigades one behind the other, the corps artillery between the divisions of each army corps. For the present the question is merely one of a short march of less than four miles to occupy the northern road to Verdun. During the noon hour the troops will rest."²

As we know, the Saxons had thereupon to start their movement from Mars la Tour directly north toward Jarny, while the Prussian Guards, who were camped west of them,

¹Prince Frederick Charles of Prussia. *Denkwürdigkeiten aus seinem Leben* (Memorable Events of his Life). Arranged and published, mainly from the posthumous papers of the Prince, by Wolfgang Foerster, Captain on the Great General Staff, vol. 2, p. 229, (Stuttgart & Leipzig 1910). The orders of the Prince read somewhat differently in the new Great General Staff account, vol. 5, p. 60, (216, *ante*). Especially important there is in addition "the two infantry brigades one behind the other." The passage speaking of the supposed withdrawal of the enemy "on both roads in front of and towards Conflans" is evidently a typographical error and should read "in front of us toward Conflans." It is gratifying that Captain Foerster gives full credit (page 255) to "the widely known caution and initiative of the Crown Prince of Saxony," on August 18.

²P. 216, *ante*.

had to advance in a northeasterly direction upon Doncourt. These orders from Prince Frederick Charles somewhat depressed the leaders of the XIIth Army Corps. General Gustav von Schubert, who at that time was a lieutenant-colonel attached to the staff of Prince George, writes as follows:¹

"We wondered why we were drawn from the center to the extreme left wing, which necessitated a crossing with the Guard Corps on our left. We felt that we were to be cheated out of our chance to participate in the impending battle and that the Guards were given the preference." "It appeared pretty certain that the march of the extreme left wing from Mars la Tour to Jarny would be a stroke in the air and that the army corps marching on the right would in all probability encounter the enemy."

To explain this remarkable disposition, which was disapproved also by Moltke, General von Schubert states (further on) that merely personal views had probably influenced Prince Frederick Charles:

"The valiant and ambitious Prince was not without prejudices, and one of them was that only the Guard Corps and possibly the IID and IIId Corps (Pomeranians and Brandenburgers) of the entire army deserved complete trust in regard to their efficiency. What could be expected of the little Saxons, when a heavy and decisive battle threatened?"

The order of standing here given, supposed to be the order of value the Prince placed on the corps, is surely erroneous. The governor general of the Province of Pomerania, Freiherr Senfft von Pilsach wrote of his own volition to Prince Frederick Charles in the spring of 1864 that he was accused of showing partiality to Brandenburgers, Pomeranians, etc., and of slighting other troops, especially the Guards and the VIIth Army Corps.² General von Goeben and the biographer of the Prince, Captain Foerster, confirm his special fondness for those troops which he had had under his command and known for years;³ those, however, were

¹ *Lebenserinnerungen*, p.p. 293, 294 (P. 406, ante) and 490, 491.

² Prince Frederick Charles of Prussia; vol. 1, p. 306, Note 1.

³ Zernin, *Das Leben des Generals von Goeben*, (Life of General von Goeben) vol. I, pp. 280-281. When the Prince changed command from the IID to the IIId Brandenburg Army Corps, he stated "The Pomeranians are the best soldiers in the World." (vol. I, p. 240); later he said of the IIId Corps, "While the Brandenburgers may in general be considered as zouaves and have been trained by me for years both morally and physically in the fight of man against man, the 13th Divi-

not the Guards, but the Pomeranians and the Brandenburgers. It may possibly be true that Frederick Charles thought more of the elite corps of the Prussian army than he did of the Saxons, but the opinion of General von Schubert to the effect that he intended to deprive the Saxons of their share of the victory is evidently wrong. He, the Prince, firmly believed in a westward movement by Bazaine, and so must have believed that he could soonest reach him with his left wing and force him to fight.¹ On the other hand, the account given by Prince Krafft zu Hohenlohe-Ingelfingen in the 4th volume of his work *Aus Meinem Leben* (From my Life), pp. 61, 62, appears to me to be correct in the main points and to allow a close guess at the real thought of Frederick Charles. It reads:

"In the morning of August 18 Prince August of Württemberg entreated Prince Frederick Charles that his corps, the Guard, might be allowed to execute the envelopment and that the XIIth Corps might advance on Bruville, because the former corps was already on the left of the latter. In vain. Once more I (Hohenlohe) urgently importuned General Stiehle, Prince Frederick Charles' chief of staff, to avoid such a crossing of two army corps, which would cost hours and which subsequently, when completed, would spread disorder and uncertainty among everything coming up in our rear, because the columns, trains,

sion is exactly opposite in so far as that is possible in one and the same army. The Brandenburger, devoted to me unto death, fleet as a deer, seeking hand to hand conflict—the Westphalian, more cautious and better suited to fight in mass—what a contrast!" (vol. I, p. 282.) That the Prince "was no friend of the Guard" is again emphasized by Count Richard von Pfeil, Major General, reserve list, in his work *Vor vierzig Jahren. Persöhnliche Erlebnisse und Bilder aus grosser Zeit* (Forty Years Ago. Personal Experience and Pictures of a Pregnant Time); Schweidnitz 1911; p. 25.

¹This appears to me to be proved also by the battle reports of the Potsdam Guard Hussars, which I was permitted to examine by the present regimental commander, Freiherr von Senden. Concerning August 18, it is noted in the war diary of the 4th Squadron: "Toward 6.15 a.m. the squadron was ordered on reconnaissance. Captain von Holleben, chief of staff of the division, indicated on the French general staff map hill 277 south of Bruvill as the point to be reached. Captain von Holleben accompanied the squadron. The enemy was supposed to be in close proximity." That this applies equally to Frederick Charles is proved by a report sent by him about 6.15 to Royal Headquarters: "No enemy is marching in direction of St. Marcel nor as far as Doncourt. Their late camp at St. Marcel is empty; there was marching on the road during the night," as also by the entry in his diary shortly before seven o'clock: "Enemy, who was north of us yesterday, appears to have withdrawn towards the north; St. Marcel and Bruville unoccupied." *Prinz Friedrich Karl von Preussen*, vol. II, p. 231.

ammunition reserve, and field hospitals, who knew that the Saxons were on our left, would lose their way or, in the most favorable case, cross and delay each other. It was in vain. Stiehle said that the Prince had duly considered these matters but still insisted on having the Guard Corps fight in the center; that the Prince was not acquainted with the XIIth Corps; that he knew what he could expect of the Guard Corps; that the best troops were invariably placed in the center."

This actually was Frederick Charles' true opinion and governed his desire to have, between the Saxons and Hessians—who had fought on the side of Austria four years before—Prussian troops who would thus spur on the neighbors on their right and left and carry them forward.¹ In addition he probably believed himself able more quickly to block to the French the road through Jarny to Conflans and Etain with the Saxons, marching on both sides of the road from Mars la Tour to Jarny than with the Guard which was marching in the Yron valley and presumably advancing very slowly; and, finally, the presence of the Saxon cavalry division on the extreme left wing may have influenced Prince Frederick Charles' decision to take the Guard more to the center. However, this crossing remained an error in any case; for, as Hohenlohe remarks, sarcastically and to the point, of the praise given the Guard by Stiehle "We do not beat the enemy with fine phrases, but with saving of time;" and Moltke, in his history of the Franco-German War, also disapproves of this disposition made by Prince Frederick Charles.

After the Prince had concluded his discussion with the leaders of the XIIth, Xth, and Guard Corps and had ridden off to give the necessary directions also to the Brandenburgers, Hessians, and Schleswig-Holsteiners, Crown Prince Albert issued orders, at 5.20 a.m., to his Saxon army corps; and as these orders are incorrectly reprinted in the book of the Great General Staff dealing with the 18th of August, 1870, they are here reprinted verbatim.²

Sent from Mars la Tour, 18 August, 5.20 a.m.

The 23d Inf. (Div.) will form north of Mars la tour an advance guard, of 3 Ba(ttalions), Cavalry R(egiment, 1 Batt(ery), which will im-

¹So also in *Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik*, vol. V, p. 107, Comments.

²War Archives, Box 528, No. 75, Reports from 17-8-70 to 30-9-70 inclusive; p. 45 (See page 217 *ante*.)

mediately fall in and march on Jarny. It will reconnoiter, on the left through Ville sur Yron, searching the woods of la Ville aux Près and pushing as far as Friaucville.

The Div. will form north of Mars la tour in a rendezvous position, the 45th Br(igade) right, and the 46th Br(igade) left of the highroad to Jarny and will follow in that formation, battalions at quarter platoon interval, half an hour's distance behind the advance guard.

The Corps Art(illery) follows the 46th Br(igade) with battery fronts extended as far as possible.

The 24th Inf. Div. proceeds (immediately to) Mars la tour, proceeds immediately to Mars la tour,¹ forms north of that place like the 23d Inf. and follows that division.

The (illegible word, crossed out) Amm(unition) col(umns) follow one hour in rear of the 24th Div. through Mars la tour, with fronts as broad as possible.

The trains of the division and of H(ead)q(uarters) assemble south of Mars la tour and park there.

The trains of the Army C(orps) move immediately through Thiaucourt to Mars la tour.

I am with the 23d I(nfantry) D(ivision).

T(he) c(ommanding) G(eneral)

Albert

(Crown Prince) o. S.

Immediately after this the Crown Prince ordered his cavalry division in camp at Parfondrupt to ride eastward along the Etain—Conflans—Jarny road, but to leave one regiment four miles west of Puxe to observe the roads leading to Etain. This latter order was written, not on the same sheet containing the orders to the main body of the Saxon corps as we are led to believe by the General Staff account, but on a separate sheet which Lieutenant von Hinüber carried to Count Lippe; and, in addition, the orders for the 24th Infantry Division were not composed twenty-five minutes later than those for the 23d, but immediately after the latter as conclusion of one and the same corps orders. Can it be that the officer who copied them by direction of the Great General Staff was led to take this erroneous view from the fact that the first half of the orders was written on one side, the second half on the other side of

¹The second "proceeds immediately to Marsla tour," is crossed out.

the message blank which Crown Prince Albert used? The orders given the advance guard to search, on the left flank, the woods of la Ville aux Près and to push on as far as Friaucville, are omitted entirely in the General Staff account. In place of them there appears in the General Staff's book on page 61:

"The advance guard of the 23d Infantry Division received orders to advance by way of Jarny and Labry toward Hatrizé, reconnoitering both flanks, and to take up a battle position there. It thus received a march objective more than five kilometers beyond the march objective, Jarny, set by corps headquarters and this took it to the left bank of the Orne."

Nothing of this is contained in the orders of Crown Prince Albert; and in the account of the part taken by the 23d Infantry Division in the battle of St. Privat on August 18, 1870, drafted by Lieutenant Colonel Schubert during the succeeding night¹ it is merely stated:

"At 5.30 a.m., August 18, the Division, in bivouac immediately south of Mars la Tour along the Metz—Paris road, received orders from corps headquarters to send out an advance guard along the road from Mars la Tour through Jarny towards Briey, but with the main body to proceed into a rendezvous position north of the mentioned village and to follow the advance guard at half an hour's interval."

But if Crown Prince Albert somewhat later personally directed the cavalry point of the advance guard to the left bank of the Orne to Hatrizé and beyond, this, in view of the reports received by him, can hardly be considered a mistake.

According to Lieutenant Colonel Schubert's account the corps artillery was to immediately follow the 23d Division; the 24th Infantry Division the corps artillery. Prince George designated the Rifle Regiment No. 108, the 1st Cavalry Regiment, the 2d Light Battery, the 2d Pionier Company, and Sanitary Detachment No. 1 to form the advance guard under command of Major General von Craushaar. The advance guard started its march at 7 a.m., followed at 7.30 a.m. by the main body of the division formed into two parallel columns; the right column, under Colonel Garten, consisting of the 45th Infantry Brigade, two heavy batteries and one light

¹ War Archives, Box 506, IIC. Accounts (reports) from 16 July to 31 December, 1870.

battery, the left column, under Colonel von Montbé, of the 46th Infantry Brigade, one heavy battery, the 4th Pionier Company, and the 1st Field Hospital; behind the 45th Brigade marched the 47th; behind the 46th, the 48th Brigade. The main body of the 23d Division reached Jarny at 8.30 a.m. and, by orders of the corps commander, halted for some time, while the advance guard scouted on the left of the Orne through Labry and Hatrizé toward Valleroy and occupied Conflans on the left flank. To the right of the Orne valley patrols advanced on Doncourt and Jouaville. No enemy was encountered anywhere, but connection was established with the Guard Corps marching on the right of the XIIth Corps from Mars la Tour through Bruville to Doncourt.

While the Saxons were marching around and through Mars la Tour the Guard had approached that village from the west and had then stacked arms; quite naturally it was some time before the 24th Division, which had bivouacked at Puxieux, could come up and the entire XIIth Corps, assembled north of Mars la Tour, resume the march in battle formation and clear the road to the northeast for the Guard. Hohenlohe remarks on this:

"Instead of in mass of brigades the Saxons passed us in march columns. Thus we lost three and a half valuable hours in waiting. At that time we were very indignant over this formation of the Saxons, but we soon convinced ourselves that they were not to blame. For, when we started our movement, we also could not march in masses of brigades, because the terrain in our front soon compelled us to assume the march column formation."

In any case we will hardly go wrong in assuming that the Guard has no more cordial feeling for the Saxons on August 18, 1870 than did the Saxons for the Guard, and that neither corps was particularly anxious to sacrifice itself for the other. Prince George wrote to Colonel Schubert on December 22, 1871: "On the 18th of August the Guard did not pass behind the Saxon army corps, but through it, and directly behind the 23d Division."¹ But this statement does not conform to the actual facts. According to Hohenlohe, Prince August of Württemberg had but one squadron of

¹Gustav von Schubert, *Lebenserinnerungen*, p. 512.

Hussars trot through the march column of the Saxons to reconnoiter the position and strength of the enemy in the direction assigned the Guard; and all accounts, known to me, agree that Prince August could not have his corps continue the march until 9 o'clock¹ and that consequently probably only that small body of cavalry interfered for a short time with the march of the Saxon 24th Division.²

The Saxons have frequently been blamed for having been too slow with their march that day; and especially, many critics hold, they should have reached Jarny earlier, and then, starting from there immediately in a northeasterly direction towards Ste. Marie aux Chênes and Roncourt, they could have attacked the French right wing one and a half to two hours earlier than was the case. In so far as concerns the march in the forenoon, I hold, with General von Hodenberg, that this criticism is not justified. Crown Prince Albert had issued his corps orders at 5.20 a.m. One hour later the 23d Division was already at the assigned rendezvous place north of Mars la Tour; the 24th Division, according to Hohenlohe's statement, could not arrive at that place from Puxieux, to which place the orders for starting had to be first taken, until about or after 6.45 a.m.; and it is therefore easily understood that the entire corps, now assembled in battle formation, could not start its advance guard until about 7 a.m.³ The distance to Jarny could

¹So also in *Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik*, V. 67. (p. 218 ante.)

²Freiherr von Hodenberg states the same in the *Leipziger Zeitung* in 1898 (P. 132 ante). And the war diaries of the Guard Hussars report that the regiment, with the exception of the 4th Squadron, sent ahead for reconnaissance, had to wait at Mars la Tour, according to the diary of the 5th Squadron "about 2 hours;" according to that of the 2d—which fixes the start for Doncourt at about 9.30 a.m.—one hour longer.

³Gustav von Schubert's statement in *Lebenserinnerungen*, page 294 (P. 406, ante.) "The army corps massed itself in battle formation south of Mars la Tour in two parallel columns and, crossing the village, started with its advance guard at 6.45 a.m." is erroneous, as shown by his own account of the part played by the 23d Division in the battle of St. Privat. The battle report rendered by the 1st Battalion, 1st (Life) Grenadier Regiment No. 100 (War Archives, Box 505, No. 15) states of August 18, agreeing with the official report of the Crown Prince to King John (Box 506, b5): "The regiment started at 6 a.m. from its bivouac at Mars la Tour and joined the 2d Grenadier Regiment No. 101 northeast of that village; the march to the front was taken up in a northerly direction at 7 a.m." And in the report of the 2d Grenadier

hardly have been covered in less time, in the prescribed formation. According to Schubert's report the 46th Brigade marching west of the road took only one hour and a half to cover a distance of a good four miles. The 45th, on its right, remained apparently somewhat in rear but had to cover a materially longer distance; the road and the stream bending out far to the east. The advance guard, marching in front of the 46th Brigade, had hardly passed Jarny, and the leading elements of the 45th Brigade had hardly reached Château Moncel, southeast of that place, when Captain von Treitschke (attached by Prince George to the advance guard), who had gone ahead with one squadron of the 1st Cavalry Regiment¹ on the road leading from Conflans through Labry west of Hatriz and Valleroy to Briey, reported at 8:20 a.m. from north of Labry that apparently one French battery stood in position west of Valleroy and that infantry columns could be seen between that village and the woods of Abbeville. Captain von Treitschke also thought he saw at the same time infantry columns east of Jarny, north of Doncourt; all of which indicated that the enemy was in front and on the right flank. Major General von Craushaar immediately caused the advance guard to halt and occupy Jarny and Conflans. In rear of it the 46th Brigade prepared for battle. Of the two regiments forming the main body of the 45th Brigade, the Guard Grenadiers took position at Château Moncel, while the 2d Grenadier Regiment No. 101 received orders to take up a flanking position along the watercourse from Château Moncel to Bruville.² Patrols sent ahead by

Regiment No. 101 of August 18 it is stated: "The brigade started at 7.15 a.m., the Life Regiment in the first, the 2d Grenadier Regiment in the second line through Bruville to Chateau Moncel." (War Archives, Box 496, War Diary II. Grenadier Regiment No. 101.) The 2d Grenadier Regiment had started from the bivouac south of Mars la Tour at 6.15 a.m., consequently the 23d Infantry Division did not take—as *Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik*, V. 106, Comments, censoriously states—one hour and twenty minutes to form north of Mars la Tour; but only a little more than half that time.

¹Now the 1st Hussar Regiment "König Albert" No. 18. It was the 1st Squadron, commanded by Captain von Welck, with First Lieutenant von Posern and Second Lieutenant Schmalz as his subordinates.

²When in *Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik*, V. 117, Comments, it is stated "It could hardly be maintained that the army corps, in this narrow and confined position, was especially prepared to meet a possible attack from the north," it is forgotten that the Saxons at that moment appeared also to be threatened from the east.

this regiment soon reported that Bruville had been occupied on August 16 by 1,400 hostile infantry, who had left the place early August 17, and that numerous French cavalry had passed through the village the night of August 17-18; that the enemy in Doncourt had been alarmed by the Prussian Guard Hussars, just arrived there, and had left the village in all haste. At 8.45 a.m. a report arrived from Lieutenant von Posern to the effect that the right flank patrol had pushed forward as far as Tichémont and had also searched Jouaville, but had seen nothing of the enemy who appeared to have fallen back upon Metz. Finally, Captain von Treitschke supplemented his first report by a second one, stating that he had been mistaken and that the supposed fleeing infantry columns had turned out to be fleeing, villagers.¹ Thus the entire matter was a false alarm and the deployment of the leading two brigades for battle unnecessary; but that took hardly more than an hour and no time at all was lost thereby, for the first objective given by Prince Frederick Charles—"for the present the question is merely one of a short march of less than four miles to occupy the northern road to Verdun"—had been reached, and there was still absolutely no definite information concerning the whereabouts of the enemy: on the contrary this could be gained only through far reaching reconnaissance. Therefore Crown Prince Albert was fully justified in reassembling the corps, and halting at Jarny and Château Moncel to rest. The advance guard he ordered to have its cavalry reconnoiter to Briey, Auboué, and Ste. Marie aux Chênes and to learn if hostile columns had been there and in what direction they had marched,² and at the same time General von Craushaar was directed to send one platoon to the west towards St. Jean les Buzy to establish connection with the division under Count Lippe.³

¹According to information kindly given me by General of Infantry von Treitschke in person. See copies of reports on file in War Archives (Box 528 No. 75) mentioned in *Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik*, V. 63-4. (P. 219 ante.)

²This order was sent out from corps headquarters at 9.45 a.m. (War Archives, Box 528, No. 75.)

³War Archives, Box 492, No. 24, War Diary of the Royal Saxon 1st Cavalry Regiment during the Campaign 1870-71. This task was performed by one platoon of the 2d Squadron under First Lieutenant Meyer.

As is known, General von Moltke had already that morning informed Prince Frederick Charles that, in case the road leading through Doncourt and Jarny should be found unoccupied, he was not to send the XIIth and the Guard Corps too far to the west, and further notified him at about 8.30 a.m. that, in his opinion, Bazaine stood with his entire force on the heights west of Metz and that the French position extended to about Amanweiler. However, concentration movements in the hostile camp, believed to be seen by the Prussian right wing, caused him to change his opinion between 9 and 10 o'clock. He interpreted these movements as preparations for marching off in a northerly direction on Briey, and informed the commander-in-chief of the Second Army that the First Army under General Steinmetz presumably would not require support by more than the IIIrd Corps.¹ This apparently meant that the Second Army was to do everything possible to overtake the departing enemy and force him to give battle. Prince Frederick Charles, who personally firmly believed up to 9 o'clock that Marshal Bazaine was marching north or northwestward, appears to have held a different view after the arrival of the reports from the Crown Prince of Saxony; at least, in spite of the information sent him from Royal Headquarters at 10 o'clock, he issued orders to the IXth Corps, which formed the right wing of the Second Army, to advance in a northeasterly direction against the hostile right wing and to attack it for the present with artillery. The Guard Corps he directed to continue its march to the front through Doncourt to Vernéville and if necessary to support the IXth Corps. The Crown Prince of Saxony, on the other hand, he directed to remain stationary with his Saxons at Jarny. Only if then interference proved unnecessary were the Saxons (as was stated in the orders for the Xth Corps, which was then to take their place) to continue the march to Ste. Marie aux Chênes. Only towards 10.30 a.m. did Moltke again revert to the conviction that the enemy intended to make a stand on the plateau between Le Point du Jour and Montigny la Grange, and he then ordered the commanding general of the

¹P. 226 *ante*.

Second Army to attack from the direction of Amanweiler. Prince Frederick Charles thereupon, at 11.30 a.m., directed the Guard Corps on that village with orders "to advance from there envelopingly against the hostile right wing;" at the same time orders were sent to the IXth Corps to delay a serious engagement until the Guard should appear from Amanweiler, and at 11.45 o'clock to the Crown Prince of Saxony to march on Ste. Marie aux Chênes, to secure by cavalry toward Briey and through Conflans and to send, if possible, cavalry as far as the valley of the Mosel, to interrupt railroad and telegraph lines to Thionville.¹

Thus finally the initial steps were taken for the wide turn to the right which was to lead to finding the enemy and to the gigantic battle of Gravelotte—St. Privat. It was no small credit to Prince Frederick Charles—who at the start had had an entirely erroneous conception—that he prepared the way for it by deciding in the tenth hour to start the IXth, and the Guard Corps in a northeasterly direction and did not allow himself to be again deluded by the information sent from Royal Headquarters. It also was no small credit to Crown Prince Albert that he did not slavishly follow his orders from army headquarters to remain at Jarny, but advanced beyond that place on his own initiative as soon as he received positive information of the enemy.²

¹Pp. 63 and 229 *ante*.

²*Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik*, V. 89 (P. 230 *ante*) clothes its "praise" in the following words: "As the corps headquarters (Prince August of Württemberg and Crown Prince Albert) received these reports earlier (than Prince Frederick Charles), they could form a clear judgment earlier and, when the commanding generals of the Guard and the XIIth Corps decided on independent action based on their estimate of the situation, they fortunately anticipated by their action the 11.30 a.m. orders from Prince Frederick Charles." On page 117 (Comments) it says, after the confined position at Jarny and Château Moncé has been censured: "The more credit therefore must be given to the decision to abandon the (march) direction so far held to (to the north) and to seek the enemy in the northeast." But this praise is immediately qualified by the sentence: "It is not remarkable that a small part of the suite of Crown Prince Albert still adhered to the belief held until now that the XIIth Corps would be the first to encounter the enemy. The peculiar distribution of the advance guard on both banks of the Orne in the continuation of the march and the subsequently extended security position at the Bois de Ponty, which was later to prove very disadvantageous, show that he had prepared himself for surprises." Was it not perfectly natural to believe that the enemy, marching beyond the Orne to Briey, would

At 9.45 a.m. Captain von Welck, commanding the 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, forming the point of the advance guard, reported that he was in Hatriz and had sent out patrols far to the front; that Lieutenant Schmalz, who was in Valleroy, had just reported that strong hostile cavalry detachments showed themselves to the right of that village. Half an hour later Welck reported that his men had received fire from Moineville;¹ and toward 11 o'clock Lieutenant von Posern and one platoon encountered southwest of Ste. Marie aux Chênes French infantry and cavalry which hastily fled back to the village when he prepared to charge them. Crown Prince Albert, who knew from orders issued by Prince Frederick Charles at 10 o'clock and of which he had been informed, that the Guard and the IXth Corps were marching on Vernéville, decided also to start the march again in spite of the orders holding him at Jarny. This was certainly not done because of knowledge of the location and intentions of the enemy, but to prevent him either from marching off to the northwest, or from endangering the left flank of the Guard Corps. In any case it was done with the laudable desire of getting to the enemy as quickly as possible and perhaps also with the intention of enveloping, from the direction of Valleroy, the right wing of the French, should the latter make a stand at Moineville, and then to block the enemy's road to Briey. Consequently, at about 11.30 a.m., the Crown Prince ordered General von Craushaar to advance with the advance guard as left flank guard on both sides of the Orne on Valleroy and Moineville, and Prince George to occupy Tichémont and the Bois de Ponty with the 45th Brigade. The 46th Brigade was for the present to remain at Jarny at the disposition of the commanding general, the 24th Division under

attempt such surprises? and was the presence of large bodies of the enemy behind Moineville and Ste. Marie aux Chênes so improbable, considering the reports received before and after 11 o'clock?

¹As Wolfgang Foerster writes in the biography of Prince Frederick Charles (vol. 2, p. 242, note), "It is not apparent on what reports the statement was based that the enemy was at Moineville" we will here insert verbatim the report from Captain von Welck to the commander of the advance guard, which is not reprinted in *Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik*: "Our patrols were fired on from Moineville. Therefore I send one platoon to that place to reconnoiter, and if necessary to support Lieutenant Schmalz who is at Valleroy. 10.45 a.m. v. Welck."

Major General von Nehrhoff to march on Ste. Marie aux Chênes through Château Moncel, Jouaville and Batilly. The corps artillery received Giraumont en Jarnisy as immediate march objective and Count Lippe received orders to rejoin the army corps as quickly as possible and take position at the Bois de Ponty, but to leave one regiment in rear and direct it to march on Valleroy.¹ Probably not under three-quarters of an hour later did the Crown Prince receive the orders from Prince Frederick Charles to march with his entire force on Ste. Marie aux Chênes. In my opinion it is to his credit that he did not comply literally with these orders—which would have interrupted the directed and already commenced movements—but merely caused the 46th Brigade to advance also to behind the Bois de Ponty. It was still possible to suppose, from what he knew, that the enemy intended to draw off in a northwesterly direction through Ste. Marie aux Chênes, Auboué, and Briey, and in that case the most sensible thing was to advance on a broad front, about parallel to that road. In case Bazaine did not try to escape, there was still time to have the Saxon corps execute a right turn and envelop the enemy either from the northwest or the north.

Let us first follow the advance of the 24th Division, forming the right wing of the XIIth Corps. Its commander, Major General Nehrhoff von Holdernberg, made an exhaustive report of it a few days later to corps headquarters. We will let him speak for himself since his account is not yet known and the main point is to learn the course of the battle as a whole, as well as the part taken by the Saxons in the victory and the motives governing their leaders, especially those of the Crown Prince and Prince George. In his official report² he says that after the 24th Division—so it is called in this official report—had rested one hour at Château Moncel,

“the start was made, by orders of the Saxon Corps headquarters, through Château Moncel, Jouaville and Batilly in the direction of Ste. Marie aux Chênes. The advance guard started at 12.15 and was under

¹ War Archives, Box 506, 24b. Report of Saxon Cavalry Division of its employment in the battle of St. Privat, August 18, 1870.

² War Archives, Box 539, Campaign 1870-71. Posthumous military papers of Lieutenant General von Schubert: from the battle reports of the 2d Infantry Division No. 24, concerning its participation in the battle of August 18, 1870 (copy).

command of Colonel von Leonhardi and consisted of the Regiment No. 104, a squadron of the second Cavalry Regiment, and Captain von der Pforte's four-pounder battery; it was followed immediately by the main body in the following order of march: Regiment 105, the other three batteries, the 12th Jäger Battalion, the 2d Cavalry Regiment, the 48th Brigade; the sanitary detachment and pioniers, which were at the tail of the column, received orders to move up immediately. As the march through Château Moncel could be made only in narrow column, and as after passing its deployment into battle formation had to be made, the 48th Brigade was unavoidably left about half an hour's march behind the 105th Regiment. The fire heard at very close range spurred everyone to increased haste and efforts. Near Jouaville the three batteries and three squadrons in the main body were sent on at a trot to overtake the advance guard. Just as the advance guard marched around Batilly on the east, the division commander received orders from corps headquarters dated 2 o'clock to go around Batilly on the west, to advance behind the small clump of woods there in the hollow and to attempt from there to press directly on Ste. Marie aux Chênes, but to leave the 48th Brigade behind the woods of Batilly at the disposition of his Royal Highness, the corps commander. As the 48th Brigade did not return under the orders of the division commander during the course of the day, the latter is unable to report on its participation in the battle. On the other side of Batilly the advance guard at once took the direction ordered and at 2.50 the 47th Brigade, with the 12th Jäger Battalion "Crown Prince," formed in the meadow ground for the attack on Ste. Marie aux Chênes. This attack was prepared and subsequently most forcefully and successfully supported by the two six-pounder foot batteries, Captains Groh and Keysselitz, which were sent by the division commander to the hill north of St. Ail, where they immediately opened fire; the cavalry regiment and the two four-pounder batteries remained temporarily in the hollow.¹ After the division commander had come to an agreement as to the time of attack with the Prussian division commander, Major General von Pape, commanding on his right, Colonel von Leonhardi received orders at 3 o'clock to attack Ste. Marie aux Chênes. At 3.10 the brigade started to attack, the 12th Jäger Battalion in line of company columns with a dense skirmish line as first line; it was followed by the first battalions of Regiments 104 and 105 extended in line of company columns as second line, followed by the second battalions in half-battalions and the 3d battalions in attack columns as reserve. The attack of the 47th Brigade naturally took direction against the west end of the village, while the southern and eastern edges were simultaneously attacked by the Guard infantry under Major General von Pape. The 47th Brigade, though

¹ Concerning the employment of the light batteries compare the somewhat different account in A. von Kretschmar's book *Geschichte der Königlich Sächsischen Feldartillerie-Regimenter von 1821–1878*, Berlin 1879, p. 122 et seq.

suffering considerable losses under a heavy artillery fire, advanced bravely and in good order against the village, which was occupied only by a relatively small force of hostile infantry, and there gained a strong foothold. After the attack commenced, the division commander called ahead first one, then both four-pounder batteries to the left flank of the 47th brigade and had them enter the action to keep down the hostile artillery fire which was extremely heavy; the 2d Cavalry Regiment acted as support for these two batteries, but was subsequently, by orders from higher authority, employed otherwise on the left wing of the army corps. The division commander, having followed the assaulting battalions into the village of Ste. Marie aux Chênes, soon became convinced that a further advance against the dominating French position was for the present out of the question and therefore ordered Colonel von Elterlein, who had relieved the wounded Colonel von Leonhardi of the command of the 47th Brigade, to confine himself to the defense of the village. Ste. Marie aux Chênes was very poorly adapted for defense; the houses, built closely together along the narrow village street, had neither windows nor doors on the side facing the enemy, and the companies crowded together in the village (part of the Prussian 4th Guard Foot Regiment was alongside and between the Saxons) could utilize but a very few gaps between the houses to get to some stone walls facing the enemy and to secure from there and from the ditches on the left of the village the possibility of some sort of fire effect. The conduct of the men, standing in the streets and continually harassed by a hot artillery fire, was most excellent. Several times it appeared as if the enemy intended to charge; but the appearance and the fire of the Saxon corps artillery (4.40) prevented this intention. The 47th Brigade was assembled behind the village by orders of His Royal Highness, the corps commander, and on receipt of additional orders started for the woods situated between Auboué and Roncourt, followed by its four batteries. The brigade was to serve there as reserve for the 23d Division. By orders of His Royal Highness, the corps commander, the batteries, arrived in the woods, joined the left wing of the corps artillery, while the 47th Brigade followed gradually as far as the neighborhood of Roncourt; there it encountered the 2d Cavalry Regiment and parts of the 48th Brigade and went into bivouac. The other parts of the 48th Brigade and the pioniers were in bivouac the other side of Roncourt. The sanitary detachment had commenced its work during the attack on Ste. Marie aux Chênes at the dressing station behind the village."

Let us at once follow this report of the commander of the 24th Division with the report of the 23d Division, commanded by Prince George; this report, as already stated, was written on the evening of the day of the battle by a general staff officer of the Prince, Lieutenant Colonel Schu-

bert, and reads as follows concerning the events of the second half of August 18:

"At 11:30 a.m. the commanding general issued orders for the resumption of the march of the army corps, according to which the advance guard was to march on both sides of the Orne as far as Moineville and Valleroy; of the 23d Infantry Division, the 45th Brigade was to occupy Tichémont and the woods of Ponty (on the right bank of the Orne), the 46th, on the other hand, to remain in reserve north of Jarny. During the execution of this movement, which began at about 11.45 o'clock, the division commander, who was with the 45th Brigade, received information at Giraumont that the commanding general reserved to himself the disposition of the 46th Infantry Brigade, and that the 24th Division, following the 23d Division, had been started on the right of the 45th Brigade through Château Moncel, Jouaville, and Batilly toward Ste. Marie aux Chênes. The 45th Infantry Brigade was still on the march between Château Moncel and Tichémont when, about 12.15 o'clock, the first sounds of a fire fight were heard, coming from a northeasterly direction. Columns of the Prussian Guard Corps were seen in the vicinity of Jouaville keeping direction on Batilly. The 45th Brigade now traversed Tichémont and was proceeding to occupy the Bois de Ponty as directed when, about 1.45 o'clock, an orderly officer from the Prussian Guard Corps arrived and reported to the division commander that the battle now in progress, the noise of which became louder and louder, was taking place within, and on one side of, the forest of Vernéville; that in addition a French camp, of at least one division, was at Ste. Marie; that the Prussian 1st Guard Division had started at about 12 o'clock from Doncourt for Anoux la Grange; that other French troops were in tent camps at St. Privat and Roncourt and were marching toward the battle at Vernéville; and that weak infantry detachments were between Batilly and Ste. Marie.

"Under these conditions and in consideration of the steadily increasing artillery fire the undersigned division commander decided to abandon the occupation of the Bois de Ponty and to take the direction on Ste. Marie through Batilly and if possible operate against the hostile right flank. Unfortunately a rapid execution of this decision was prevented by the fact that the 45th Brigade had become very much extended in the occupation of the Bois de Ponty and had to be first assembled again. Therefore at the start only the six companies of the Body Guard Grenadier Regiment and the 1st Light Battery (Captain Lengnick), which were in front, could be started in the direction of the large white house in Ste. Marie, as at about 2.15 o'clock we perceived from Batilly that the fighting was already in progress around Ste. Marie.

"It was exactly 2.30 o'clock when the first light battery went into position at the northern point of the woods immediately north of Batilly and opened fire on Ste. Marie aux Chênes, protected on its left

by the above mentioned one and a half battalions and detachments of the Prussian Guard Hussar Regiments. On the other side of a ravine in front stood the Prussian Guard Rifle Battalion in a wood fight against Ste. Marie. The range proved too long for the four-pounders, therefore the battery crossed the ravine, advancing to within 1,200 or 1,300 paces of Ste. Marie into the line of the above mentioned one and a half battalions and opened fire anew. At the same time the position just left by that battery was occupied by batteries of the Saxon corps artillery (2.45 o'clock.) Here also, between 2.30 and 2.45 o'clock, the division commander received the following orders from corps headquarters, sent from there at about two o'clock: 'The 1st Division, which is hereby again given the disposition of the 2d Brigade now behind the west corner of the Bois de Ponty, will take direction through Coinville and the small woods east of Auboué and advance against the position at Roncourt.' At the same time the advance guard under General von Craushaar appeared on the left flank from the Orne; the 3d Battalion of the Rifle Regiment, sent far to the front, had already turned against Ste. Marie, participating in the assault on that village with one company. The other two battalions, the 2d Light Battery Westmann and the 1st Cavalry Regiment also were on the march on Ste. Marie, crossing the Orne at Hatriz and proceeding through Beaumont and the small wood at Bondeseille.

"The division commander now decided, before proceeding to any further operations, to assemble the division under cover in the bottom of the valley in front, which joins the Orne valley at Auboué, and to reestablish order, especially as the 2d and 3d Battalions of the Body Guard Grenadier Regiment were still far behind. This assembly took up considerable time, and was also not unobserved by the enemy, who threw shells into the valley. The capture of Ste. Marie aux Chênes at about 3.30 o'clock by the Prussian Guard, the Saxon 47th Brigade, and one company of the Rifle Regiment now permitted deviation from the orders directing that Coinville—a difficult and confined place—be the assembly point for the troops in rear, and to substitute for that assembly the hill east of Grimoneau north of the Verdun road, which could not be seen by the enemy. In the meantime, one squadron of the 1st Cavalry Regiment had been sent toward Hautmécourt and Joeuf to reconnoiter on the left flank, and orders had been sent to the 46th Infantry Brigade behind the west corner of the Bois de Ponty to draw up to Moineville."

Let us stop for a moment and get a clear idea of the importance of what we have just read. Without doubt, we see here instances of extremely important independent decisions by the different leaders. The first who of his own initiative changed the march direction of his column was the commander of the advance guard, Major General von Craushaar; he was induced to this probably by the report of

Captain von Welck, which unfortunately is not printed in *Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik*.

"The Prussian Guard Corps entreats immediate advance on Ste. Marie aux Chênes. The advance guard of the Jägers has been notified. v. Welck."¹

As Major von Craushaar knew that the Orne valley, as far as Auboué, and also Briey, were at that time free of the enemy, he believed that he was justified in complying with the entreaty of the Guard Corps and turned east early enough to enable him to support the assault on Ste. Marie with at least one company. The second higher leader who also ordered a right turn on his own responsibility was Prince George: when Captain von Hodenberg reported to him, by direction of corps headquarters, between 1.30 and 1.45 o'clock, that St. Privat was occupied by the French, and immediately after the Prussian orderly officer (Lieutenant von Meyerinck of the Guard Hussars), mentioned in the report of Lieutenant Colonel Schubert appeared and gave more exact information of the strength and movements of the enemy and entreated an instant advance of the Saxons,² Prince George directed the 45th Brigade, still

¹ War Archives, Box 528, No. 75, page 2.

² According to *Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik*, page 168, note 2 (page 247 *ante*), Lieutenant von Meyerinck had been sent to meet the Saxons on the request of General von Pape. According to the war diary of the 5th Squadron of the Guard Hussars he rode by orders of the regimental commander, Lieutenant Colonel von Hymmen. It is stated in the diary: "As soon as we had left the rendezvous (of the 1st Guard Division at Doncourt) the lieutenant colonel had the regiment form in column of platoons on account of the terrain, and we marched toward Ste. Marie across country along a fold in the terrain. Here the lieutenant colonel relinquished command for some time to Major von Meyerinck, himself riding ahead. The major drew the regiment off a little farther to the left, under cover of a small wood which allowed us to break forth either right or left. The major himself took post on a rise to the left of the woods, from where he had an open view onto the battleground in front. After we had halted here for about fifteen minutes Baron von Kottwitz rejoined the squadron with the first platoon. At the same time the lieutenant colonel returned, took command again, and sent off the major to urge His Royal Highness, the Crown Prince of Saxony, to bring up the XIIth Corps as rapidly as possible. The desire of Lieutenant Colonel von Hymmen to have Major von Meyerinck ride immediately to the XIIth Corps, as well as the major's ride, entreating the Saxons to advance immediately on our left flank, is of much greater importance for the 18th of August, than is generally sup-

under his orders, to advance immediately upon Ste. Marie aux Chênes; in this he hoped, as Schubert states in his *Memoirs*, page 296,

"to operate if possible against the hostile right flank; and, if things did not go as smoothly as in peace maneuvers, the causes should be looked for only in the friction of the war machine and the characteristics of the subordinate commanders."

This praiseworthy initiative of the commanders of the 23d Division and of the advance guard, which is mentioned, but without special praise, in *Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik*, pages 169 and 170,¹ is finally and worthily joined by the independent decision of Crown Prince Albert. He undoubtedly had made his decision before Captain von Hodenberg arrived with the report from Prince George, dated about 1.40 o'clock, of the turn which the latter had commenced and before Lieutenant von Meyerinck brought the entreaty for hastening the march; for the Crown Prince's new plan was written down as corps orders about 2 o'clock and came into the hands of Prince George only between 2.30 and 2.45 o'clock.² Captain von Hodenberg, at that time belonging to the general staff of the XIIth Army Corps, describes in 1898, in the *Leipziger Zeitung* these important events and, strangely enough, mentioning his ride to Prince George:

"When his corps continued the advance after 12 o'clock, Crown Prince Albert tranquilly³ waited on the rise south of Batilly for the

posed; for very likely this was the first request, or at least very definite request, for haste. Any one who participated in this bloody battle knows how important for this day was the timely appearance of the Saxons." The nephew of Major von Meyerinck, at that time a lieutenant and now a major on the retired list, also named von Meyerinck, has kindly informed me that not his uncle but he himself was sent by the regimental commander to the Saxons and that he showed them the way.

¹Pages 249 and 250 *ante*.

²According to Gustav von Schubert, *Lebenserinnerungen*, page 491. Therefore I prefer to assume that von Hodenberg rode to Prince George before von der Planitz reached the Crown Prince, and that von Hodenberg bases his vivid account of events only on the statements of other eyewitnesses.

³See page 137 *ante*. The German of the von Hodenberg article says "quietly—though very eagerly, especially as the noise" With this exception, and the one mentioned below, the paragraph quoted is, as it appears in the article given earlier, almost literally translated. It will be noted that Dr. Haake, in quoting, makes certain changes in form and also omissions which he does not indicate.—Ed.

further development of events. A new situation was created only at about 1.30 o'clock by the return of Captain von der Planitz, who had been sent ahead. He had found Ste. Marie aux Chênes still free of the enemy at 12.30 o'clock, had also seen from there that St. Privat was held in strong force and that that place, situated on a height, offered a remarkable degree of resistance against an attack from the west, all of which he reported in great detail. The Crown Prince, examining the map, listened to Captain von der Planitz without saying a word and immediately said: 'In that case we will not attack in front, but will go around'¹ and made a corresponding movement with his left arm. The sudden decision was then carefully considered in its execution, for which there was in this case plenty of time."

Undoubtedly this resolve was the decisive factor in the success of the day. Of course it easily suggested itself. It hung in the air, so to speak, after Moltke had given the idea of the envelopment of the hostile right wing in his orders of about 10.30, and after Prince Frederick Charles had used the word "envelop" in the orders to the Guard Corps,² issued about one hour later, information of which order was transmitted to the Crown Prince of Saxony. But in any event, even when Captain von der Planitz, describing the reconnaissance ride, caused this thought to arise anew, it remained a credit to the Crown Prince—and was so commended by the Prussian General Staff—and a proof of his independent thinking and acting, that he immediately, without exchanging one word with his chief of staff,³ adopted the plan of envelopment and executed it without first asking permission therefor from his superior. This decision of the Crown Prince secured victory to the Germans on the 18th of August. By operating to beyond the hostile right wing the Saxons succeeded in first rolling up the Corps Canrobert opposite them and later, by a combined advance with the Prussian Guard, in driving the French out of their strong position, which latter feat the Guard, unassisted, would hardly have been able to perform on that day by its frontal attack.⁴

¹The German word *herumgehen* implies a turning movement rather than an envelopment as translated on page 137, *ante*.—Ed.

²Page 63, *ante*.

³As was personally told me by an eyewitness, His Excellency Lieutenant General Müller von Berneck, reserve list.

⁴As stated in *Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik*, V, 228 (Comments), it is true that the measures for the envelopment of the

The leader of the Saxons was fully cognizant of this merit and has claimed for his corps and himself the glory of having turned the scales on the 18th of August; for this we have reliable proof. In the copy of Moltke's History of the Franco-Prussian War 1870-71, which is in the State Archives at Dresden, after the following sentence on page 60 "only toward 7 o'clock two Saxon infantry brigades arrived on the battlefield on the left of the Guard" we find, in the handwriting of Lieutenant General von Ehrenstein, who died in October, 1899, and had owned this copy, the following pencil notation, which I transcribed with some difficulty. He had participated in the campaign as captain and personal adjutant to Prince George and his note, which I publish by permission of his relatives, reads:

"It is amazing that the decisive interference of the Saxons is considered so incidental. Our King (Albert) related to me himself that he had offered his support to the Guard Corps for the assault on St. Privat but that that offer had been declined. He soon perceived that the assault would fail, and therefore, on his own initiative, decided on the turning of the hostile right wing which proved decisive."¹

It is true that this account does not exactly correspond with actual facts, for the Crown Prince arrived at the decision to turn the French flank long before the attack on St. Privat could be thought of. But it is undoubtedly true that the decision was the result of his own initiative, and if Moltke knew this to be a fact he was guilty of a sin of omission in not mentioning it at all in his book. The reason for that is probably to be found in a certain dissatisfaction with

hostile right wing taken by the Crown Prince at about 2 o'clock were not quite sufficient; but that was the fault of the insufficient report of von Meyerinck. That Canrobert's corps, as the latter reported, was marching from Roncourt and St. Privat to Vernéville—that is toward the rear—was absolutely wrong as was found out later.

¹For more comprehensiveness we will cite two other notations. Of the 3d paragraph, page 58, General von Ehrenstein says: "General Fransecky told me personally that he was received by von Moltke with reproaches for arriving so late on the battlefield—which was due to the long march—and sent at once into the battle." Compare this with the personal recollections of J. von Verdy du Vernois, *Im Grossen Hauptquartier*, 1870-71, p. 108. On page 426 he added to Moltke's sentence "The war of 1866 was considered by the cabinet as necessary, as a long intended and tranquilly prepared campaign," in pencil "and in spite of this Bismarck spread, in 1866, the lie believed by many that Saxony had commenced the war. This was told me in 1867 by the Prussian general staff officer Lieutenant Colonel von Reisewitz."

the advance of the XIIth Corps, which appeared to him to be too slow. He says on page 59, "the Saxons had already participated in the capture of Ste. Marie aux Chênes, but in order to attack the enemy in flank the Crown Prince deemed it necessary first to assemble his corps at the woods of Auboué. For this one of the brigades (46th) had still to come from Jarny, and one (48th) be drawn back from Ste. Marie; so, as the corps was late in starting from Mars la Tour in the morning, its actual participation could not be expected for some hours yet." Is the slight criticism discernable in this sentence justified, and could not the XIIth Corps, as is held in *Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik*, Vol. V, pp. 227-8, Comments, perhaps have enveloped the hostile right wing somewhat sooner and thereby saved the guard from those enormous losses caused by its premature attack in front?

In his Diary, as narrated by his devoted biographer, page 255, Prince Frederick Charles expressly states "that he could not unqualifiedly agree" with the idea which others had attributed to him that the Saxons had been too slow; and Field Marshal General von der Goltz in his review of Foerster's book mentions: "the necessity for the Saxons making the long detour which they had chosen,"¹ furthermore, Lieutenant General von Schubert and his son, the editor of the former's Memoirs, contradict Moltke's and the Great General Staff's reproaches in a special appendix to the Memoirs.² General Schubert himself admits that when the 2 o'clock orders of the Crown Prince reached his brother three-quarters of an hour later on the hill south of the village of Batilly, the execution of those orders left much to be desired. The 23d Division, which was to take the road through Coinville and the small woods east of Auboué against the position at Roncourt, could as Schubert states on page 297,³

¹ Von der Goltz, *Die Denkwürdigkeiten des Prinzen Friedrich Karl von 1866-1885* in *Deutsche Rundschau*, March number 1911. He says the same in 1873 in *Die Operationen der II. Armee* on page 145: "To keep the envelopment as much concealed from the enemy as possible and with good prospects of decisive results, it had to be made under cover of the steep hill ridge west of Montois in the Orne valley passing close to Joeuf." (P. 71 *ante*)

² This applies to the premature attack of the Guard Corps on St. Privat at five o'clock in the afternoon. Gustav von Schubert, *Lebenserinnerungen*, pp. 491 to 495.

³ P. 411 *ante*.

"at once have started the movement had it been together, especially if the 46th Brigade, which had again been placed under the orders of Prince George, had not been at that time about one hour behind us; the 45th Brigade also was not assembled for some time yet and thus we had to contain ourselves in patience; our different bodies of troops arrived at Coinville greatly trying our patience with their slowness."

This was undoubtedly true of the 46th Brigade, which was kept back at about 11.30 o'clock by the Crown Prince as a reserve and then sent to the Bois de Ponty. Its commander, Colonel von Montbé, marched with it, as directed by Prince George, first to the village of Moineville situated two kilometers west of Coinville. This order was given by the Prince after due consideration, and was perfectly justified.¹ But Montbé unnecessarily kept up the battle formation during this march, made nevertheless rapid progress and, having arrived in Moineville toward 4.30 o'clock, remained there for some time "instead of closing up, as is the duty of every subordinate in rear during the progress of an attack."² He merely sent off his adjutant to Prince George to ask whether he was to proceed further³; it was after five o'clock when Captain von der Planitz, dispatched by the Crown Prince, found the brigade at Moineville after vainly looking for it at Coinville, and not till an hour later did it cross by order of Captain Planitz the Ste. Marie—Auboué road—just in time to participate gloriously, in at least the final attack, in the charge on St. Privat. Thus, Colonel von Montbé seems in my opinion to be justly blamed for insufficient independence, presence of mind and energy; but whether parts of the 45th Brigade also sorely tried the patience of their division commander I am unable to ascertain. It appears to me as if all regiments of that brigade reached Coinville and were in readiness to envelop the hostile right flank as early as the rolling country permitted, and the leaders, Prince George

¹ According to the statements of the editor of Schubert's Memoirs, Privy Church Councillor Professor Dr. Hans von Schubert, on pp. 493 and 494, in contrast to the entirely erroneous statements in *Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik*, Vol. V, p. 170. (P. 249 ante.)

² According to the judgment of the Saxon Colonel "—r" in the Scientific Supplement to the *Leipziger Zeitung*, 1907, No. 11, page 50. (P. 385 ante.)

³ George von Schimpff, "The XIIth Corps in the War of 1870-71. Part I—St. Privat la Montagne," p. 91-2, Note. (P. 174 ante.)

and Lieutenant Colonel Schubert, made an error possibly only in selecting as a concentration point a very unfavorable spot, namely the narrow plateau near Coinville, which ended in a sharp point and which, on account of being so much elevated could easily be observed and swept with fire by the enemy; but that point of concentration was very soon changed farther to the front, to the Ferme Grimoneau east of Auboué.

Concerning the further measures taken by Prince George, Lieutenant Colonel Schubert states in his official report:

"The division commander now took steps to occupy the woods towards Roncourt, to complete the concentration of the division under their cover. Consequently, about 4.15 o'clock, the most western clump of woods was occupied by the the 1st and 2d Battalions and a short time later the one farthest to the front and east by the 3d Battalion of the Rifle Regiment. For protection from the heavy shell fire directed by the hostile artillery on those woods and on the 1st and 2d Saxon Cavalry regiments in their vicinity, the 2d Heavy Battery went into position alongside the woods and directed its fire on the hostile batteries in position alongside of St. Privat. The 3d Battalion of the Rifle Regiment, at the edge of the woods farthest in front, now received an uninterrupted fire from hedges, situated toward Roncourt and occupied by hostile skirmishers, causing material losses in the battalion. (Nevertheless the battalion advanced to the attack.)¹

"It was about 4.30 o'clock when an aide from corps headquarters² reached the division commander and placed the 48th Infantry Brigade at his disposal for the ordered flank operation against Roncourt. This was more welcome as the 46th Infantry Brigade had not yet come up, probably because the orderly sent to find that brigade had been unable to locate it on account of the similarity of names of Moineville and Coinville; and the division commander, because of possible failure, did not think it advisable to make such an important attack with only one brigade.

"When the 48th Infantry Brigade arrived at about five o'clock, it was directed to take the completely covered route along the road until nearly at Jouef and from there to take the road to the ridge of Montois la Montagne and from there to Roncourt; the three available batteries of the division were also attached to this brigade, their former positions on the right wing of the division being now taken by the corps artillery."

Can now any of these measures taken by Prince George and his chief of staff be rightly found fault with? It seems

¹ The sentence in parenthesis was ruled out by Lieutenant Colonel Schubert personally.

² First Lieutenant Müller von Berneck.

to me that the intention of first concentrating both brigades at Coinville or Grimoneau before making an envelopment as ordered cannot be designated an error; even an authority like Field Marshal von der Goltz appears indeed to share the view of General von Schubert "that by ourselves with the 45th Brigade alone we could not have executed the envelopment with assured succes." Moltke, however, criticises the concentration of the entire XIIth Corps or at least that of three brigades at the woods of Auboué only as a delay of the decisive operations. Prince George ordered the occupation of these woods shortly after 3.30 o'clock on instructions from his brother who saw from a hill west of Ste. Marie aux Chênes the advance of French infantry from Roncourt on Auboué. How important and necessary haste was in this case is shown by the battle reports, on file in the Saxon War Archives, of the Rifle Regiment and those of its battalions and companies¹; all agree that not only were the hills between Roncourt and Montois la Montagne occupied by about two battalions, but also the wood groves to the west of them; and the French would undoubtedly have made the Saxon envelopment more difficult and would have delayed it more, if they had also occupied, ahead of the Rifles coming up on the double time, the woods situated not so very far from Auboué and on the Orne. Thus there is now only left for consideration the final decision of Prince George to advance one brigade along the Orne valley as far as the prolongation of the line Roncourt—Montois la Montagne and then attack in superior force and from the north and west simultaneously the enemy holding the villages. Was this decision arrived at on the Prince's own initiative and was it in any way an error?

According to Schubert's account, about 4.30 o'clock First Lieutenant Müller von Berneck, sent by the Crown Prince, arrived at Grimoneau, delivering verbal orders to Prince George that the hostile right flank was to be enveloped

¹ Boxes 490 and 497. It is stated in the battle report of the 1st Battalion: "After the difficulties of the march along the narrow valley ravine had been overcome, the battalion was started, about 3:30 o'clock, from the plateau east of Auboué in direction of the woods near Roncourt. His Royal Highness, the division commander, pointing out the importance of these woods for the decision of the day, ordered double time to be taken to gain possession of it."

through Roncourt and that for that purpose the 48th Brigade, which was following the aide from Ste. Marie aux Chênes, was placed under his orders. The Crown Prince informed his brother at the same time that the envelopment was to be completed by five o'clock; that the guard would at that time attack St. Privat from the direction of Ste. Marie. On December 22, 1871, Prince George explained:

"The 48th Brigade was not given me for the purpose of executing with it the envelopment through Montois la Montagne, but probably only for the reason that the 46th Brigade had not yet arrived. The subsequent envelopment through Montois was not ordered by the commanding general, but was my own special measure."

According to Schubert the leading elements of the 48th Brigade arrived only about 4.45 o'clock. It was five o'clock before the enveloping march could be started. There were two roads available for this decisive maneuver:

"it could be executed either as an enveloping of the hostile wing by marching through the woods of Auboué direct against Roncourt, even though we thereby described a larger arc, or as a complete turning movement by our marching in the deep cut valley of the Orne to opposite Joenf, there ascending the side of the valley near the village of Montois la Montagne, and then turning to the right against the flank and rear of the enemy. The latter road was the longest, but would have a better decisive effect, and I succeeded in persuading the Prince to take it." (p. 299)¹

The originator of the turning movement extending farther northeastward was thus Lieutenant Colonel Schubert; Prince George apparently did not accede without scruples, the main one being probably that he could, in that case, not attack at five o'clock as ordered, but hardly before half past five.² It is to be presumed that he finally acceded only because his skirmishers were fired on also from Montois la Montagne and because he entertained the belief that this village was strongly held by the enemy, which would seem to me to justify his and Schubert's decision. Prince Albert undoubtedly held the same view. Having been since about three o'clock on the hill west of Ste. Marie, he learned from

¹ P. 413 *ante*.

² This fact he also had Lieutenant Müller von Berneck report to his brother; but the lieutenant did not get back to corps headquarters until the Crown Prince had stated to an orderly officer of the Guard Corps who asked at what time the envelopment would become effective, that

the Prussian lieutenant, von Rundstedt, who was returning to his Hussar regiment, which also stood under cover at Ste. Marie, that hostile infantry was in Montois la Montagne.¹ He himself and his suite saw that the hostile skirmish line extended northward to beyond Roncourt, and shortly after four o'clock he believed he could make out the advance of French cavalry from there²; the conclusion that the movement from

the flank attack on Roncourt would start at five o'clock. Lieutenant Colonel von Zezschwitz, Albert's chief of staff, called after the Prussian adjutant: "Best say 5.45 o'clock." (von Schubert's *Lebenserinnerungen*, pp. 492-2.) Thus Crown Prince Albert was also to blame that the Prince August of Württemberg expected the appearance of the Saxons on the right flank of the enemy entirely too early and thus prematurely started the frontal attack by the Guard on St. Privat.

¹ It is stated in the war diary of the 4th Squadron of the Guard Hussars: "When the Saxon artillery went into position north of the woods between Batilly and Ste. Marie, this side of the ravine of Batilly, to prepare the attack on Ste. Marie, the 1st Platoon under Lieutenant von Rundstedt received orders to proceed as far as Auboué and reconnoiter on the left flank and in rear of the division toward Briey. Lieutenant Count Lüttichau joined that platoon. Auboué was free of the enemy. A Saxon rifle regiment was advancing along the road from Auboué down the Orne (this was a little before half past three according to the war diary of that regiment). Lieutenant von Rundstedt and Count Lüttichau rode ahead of the platoon to Montois la Montagne, which they found occupied by hostile infantry. Subsequently, after they had assured themselves that there was no room for cavalry on this wing, they returned to the regiment, joining it in its position immediately behind Ste. Marie."

General von Hodenberg states that cavalry patrols of the Guard Corps had reported to the Saxon corps headquarters that Montois la Montagne was occupied, but it is more than probable that Crown Prince Albert, who was not very far from the Guard Hussar regiment, learned of the results of Rundstedt's reconnaissance ride, perhaps even before Prince George. In the battle report of the 3d Battalion of the 107th Regiment which participated in the envelopment (War Archives, Box 1575) it is stated that the regimental commander did inform the battalion during the march through the Orne valley that Montois probably was occupied. The reverse of this, i.e.—that only some few infantry men were in Auboué, Joeuf, Montois and Malancourt and that Roncourt did not appear to be occupied, is said to have been reported about three o'clock by the adjutant of the Guard Hussars, First Lieutenant von Bayern, to General von Pape who immediately sent this adjutant to the Crown Prince. (Major Kunz, retired, in *Kriegsgeschichtliche Beispiele aus dem deutsch-französischen Kriege von 1870-71*, part 10; The Battle of St. Privat la Montagne, p. 29). I have been unable to find any substantiation of this in the archives.

² The battle report of the 2d Cavalry Regiment (War Archives, Box 505, No. 16) states: "Toward 4.30 o'clock the regiment (the present 2d Hussar Regiment No. 19) received orders through a first lieutenant of the engineer corps that it as well as the other divisional cavalry (the 1st Cavalry Regiment, at present the 1st Hussar Regiment No. 18) should advance south or north of the woods between Ste. Marie and Joeuf, as hostile cavalry was supposed to be behind that wood."

Auboué against Roncourt ordered about 2 o'clock would lead to a frontal attack, and that the 23d division would have to reach out further if it desired to bring about an actual envelopment, was thus not far fetched. The orders of Prince Frederick Charles, sent from Habonville at about 2.45 o'clock to have the telegraph and Metz—Thionville railroad destroyed by Saxon cavalry and thus take from the hostile army its last and only communication with Paris,¹ probably reached the Crown Prince early enough to induce him to change his dispositions. Basing his decision on his own personal observations, he was undoubtedly justified in taking the initial steps for an enveloping movement along the Orne,² though

¹ These orders were printed verbatim in volume 5 of *Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik* on page 192 (P. 70 *ante*). But it is not mentioned there that the last sentence "Everything goes well so far, thank God" is an addition in the handwriting of Captain von Hodenberg. Prince Frederick Charles appears several times to have urged the Crown Prince to advance more rapidly; Major von Werder brought such a request, as I was informed by Colonel von Kretschmar, and delivered his message in such a blunt manner that the Crown Prince complained to Prince Frederick Charles the next day. The Saxon artillery advanced more quickly than stated in *Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik* as has been explained in detail by Colonel von Kretschmar in the *Leipziger Zeitung*.

² According to the French General Staff account, Montois was not at all occupied and the situation of the Corps Canrobert at about five o'clock was as follows:

"On the extreme right the 1st Battalion of the 75th Regiment still held the summit of the ridge which descends from Roncourt to the woods of Auboué, one company extended as skirmishers and one company in reserve at the edge of the woods. General Bisson had Roncourt occupied by the 1st Battalion of the 9th Regiment; the 2d Battalion being in reserve south of the village." (*Les opérations autour de Metz du 13 au 18 Aout; III., Texte*. Paris 1905, p. 138.) "According to the documents available it does not appear that the French infantry extended as far as Montois (p. 441.')" But the war diaries of the Rifle Regiment and of the Grenadier Regiment No. 101 are in accord in definitely maintaining that the enemy fired from Montois. It is probable that no complete organizations were within that village, but only stragglers or dispersed soldiers; for several men—not belonging to any regiments of the Corps Canrobert—who had been looting in Ste. Marie were later on captured. (Kunz, *The Battle of St. Privat*, (p. 18) Captain von Klenck states in his report: "A Saxon infantry regiment stood behind Auboué, the officers of which were sure that the valley of the Orne was held in force by strong French detachments," and it is possible that such detachments were still there in the early afternoon hours, for numerous artificial obstructions increased the difficulties of the advance of von Klenck's squadron (Page 112 *ante*) on the road as far as Moyeuvre la Grande (von Schimpff, *Das XIIth Corps*, I, 117, note), but that squadron was not directly interfered with by the enemy and this latter fact also seems to indicate that the French right wing did not extend as far north as Montois during the later afternoon hours and in the evening.

that appears to me not to have been the measure best corresponding to actual conditions; for Montois la Montagne was evidently occupied only temporarily and by inferior forces so that the enemy was unequal to meet a direct attack on that village from Auboué.

Thus considering all the facts in the case, it appears that Molke was justified in taking the view that the Saxons could have been sooner at the assigned place and could have thus sooner decided the battle in favor of the Germans. If the riflemen, who held the woods at Auboué from a little after four o'clock, had not been compelled to carry on a mere delaying action for about an hour and a half, and if the other two regiments belonging to the 45th Brigade had, as was entirely feasible, proceeded at about five o'clock from those woods in the direction of Montois la Montagne, and if the 48th Brigade, which arrived with its leading elements at as early as 4.45 o'clock, had immediately ascended the slope for the direct support of the two regiments of the 45th Brigade,¹ then the attack of the XIIth Corps and the Guard Corps would have been made simultaneously and the Prussians would probably have been spared the enormous losses suffered; provided that their artillery in the meantime had kept up a sharp and effective fire on the defenders of St. Privat. Lieutenant Colonel Schubert's intended cutting off of the French battalions between Montois and Roncourt was not successful, since they fell back in good order to the village of Malancourt farther to the east. Because of their weak numbers they would undoubtedly have done the same thing had the Saxons advanced with the 45th and 48th

¹In the report of the 2d Grenadier Regiment No. 101 (War Archives, Box 491, Appendices to the war diary of the 2d Grenadier Regiment No. 101) it is stated that the regiment took up a position in reserve west of the woods situated between Auboué and Roncourt. "While in that position it received orders at 5.15 p.m. to advance with the Schulz Brigade, which had been given direction on Montois, in a simultaneous attack against Roncourt as soon as special orders for that should be received; but to, at once, send one battalion (1st) in the direction of Montois as well as the advance of the Schulz Brigade and then to join the general advance against Roncourt. * * * * When leaving the brigade this battalion took a covered position in the direction of Montois within the woods southwest of that village and advanced its skirmishers to within about 800 paces thereof. The battalion was fired on in this position from Montois."

Brigades directly on Montois from the west at about five o'clock.¹

The commander of the 23d Division reported the following day to corps headquarters:

"It was 5.45 when the enveloping column became visible on the heights of Montois la Montagne and when thus the expected moment had arrived for the concentric attack against Roncourt. While the 48th Brigade, which had found Montois unoccupied, advanced from the north on Roncourt, the brigade under General von Craushaar advanced from the clump of woods against the west side of the village, drove off the hostile skirmish lines in front of it, and, as Roncourt had already been evacuated by the enemy, turned with its right wing against the northern flank of St. Privat, from whence a destructive infantry fire was thinning the ranks.

"At about 6.30 o'clock Roncourt—found free of the enemy—was occupied by the 1st Battalion of the 2d Grenadier Regiment and detachments of the 2d Rifle Battalion, while on their right the 2d and 3d Battalions of the same regiment and parts of the 2d Battalion of the Life guard Grenadier Regiment engaged in a fire fight against St. Privat and came under a very effective fire. At the same time the light batteries which had accompanied the envelopment took position at 7.15 south of Roncourt, facing St. Privat, which village then became the focal point of the battle. All these detachments vigorously attacked the village, in conjunction with the Prussian 1st Guard Infantry Division which had been unable to force the entrance on the side from Ste. Marie.

"The division commander, at Roncourt, now ordered the 48th Infantry to advance between Roncourt and the edge of the woods north of it and attack St. Privat from the rear, but the edge of those woods was occupied by strong hostile infantry (the 100th Regiment) which made an advance there impossible and which drew the charges of the 48th Brigade onto itself and away from St. Privat. Further details of this affair will be found in the report of Captain von Treitschke.

"This last supporting point of the enemy was hotly attacked by the Saxon corps artillery and set afire, in a bombardment lasting from 7.15 to 7.45 o'clock, compelling the enemy to evacuate the western entrance to St. Privat. When the Saxon infantry, close to that entrance, observed this, it advanced to the assault and the 4th² and 11th Companies of the Life Guard Grenadier Regiment and the 11th Company of the 2d Grenadier Regiment were the first of the attackers to enter the village. From the direction of Roncourt the enveloping fire fight was simultaneously continued against the enemy still holding the east

¹According to the war diaries of the 7th and 8th Companies of the Rifle Regiments the woods situated south of Montois were evacuated by the French at about 5.15 o'clock.

²In the original the 4 is inserted with blue pencil over a 10.

side of the village by the Life Guard Grenadier Regiment and by the 1st Battalion 2d Grenadier Regiment and in this phase of the battle General von Craushaar found a hero's death.

"Towards 7.45 the 46th Infantry Brigade had come up from Moineville to behind the leading firing line. It received orders to carry out the last assault against the west end of the stubbornly defended village. When this assault seemed sufficiently prepared by the batteries of the corps artillery and of the 23d Infantry Division, the 46th Brigade advanced to the assault. The enemy, not awaiting this final charge, retreated along the road to Metz, and thus the battle of St. Privat came to an end. The firing of the opposing batteries continued until after dark and closed the bloody struggles of this day. The 7th Infantry Regiment No. 106, fighting on the extreme left wing of the 48th Infantry Brigade, had also succeeded in pressing forward along the edge of the forest as far as the road to Metz, thus completely closing this line of operation to the enemy.

"The division bivouacked in the positions held at approaching darkness on the captured battlefield. The division commander can bear testimony to the fact that all troops of the division performed their full duty. Details can be seen in the special reports submitted by the troops.

(signed) George, H. z. S."

Crown Prince Albert, who remained on the hill west of Ste. Marie aux Chênes until after six o'clock and then proceeded to the left wing and finally to Roncourt, also gave much praise to all troops participating in the battle. At the conclusion of his report, sent that same evening to King John, he says:

"All commanders distinguished themselves by correct leadership and all troops by extraordinary bravery, and the army corps was thus enabled to bring about a very decisive turn in the battle, as was graciously acknowledged the very evening of the day of battle by headquarters of the Second Army."

The Saxons received the same acknowledgment also from General von Pape, the commanding General of the 1st Guard Infantry Division, who appears to have laid great stress on the gaining of the sympathies of these new comrades in arms. Prior to the assault on Ste. Marie aux Chênes—although convinced that his troops could successfully accomplish that assault unaided—he proposed to the Saxon Major General von Nehrhoff to open this first battle—expected to be a successful one—in conjunction with the

Guard;¹ and in accordance with this proposition the 1st Guard Division charged the village from the southwest, the Saxon division from the northwest. Concerning the advance of the latter division Von Pape reported from Gonesse on the 24th of September to headquarters of the Guard Corps:

"The fire of the artillery was then reinforced by Major Richter, commanding the 2d Battalion of the Saxon 12th Field Artillery Regiment, and, as soon as the Saxon troops under Colonel von Leonhardi, Von Elterlein and Von Tettau were on a line with the advance guard, the assault was commenced, the Jäger Battalion Crown Prince of Saxony No. 12, under Major Count Holtzendorff, distinguishing itself by its impetuous ardor. I greatly regret my inability to give the names of several officers of the organizations mentioned whom I personally perceived distinguishing themselves during and after the action, because they deserve the fullest recognition, especially the officers and men of the Jäger Battalion."

On the other hand, General von Pape mentions several officers and noncommissioned officers of two Saxon Grenadier regiments, who greatly distinguished themselves in the assault on St. Privat.² He added:

"The 4th Foot Guard Regiment states in its battle report, dated August 19, and consequently while still under the fresh impressions of events 'It should be mentioned that the officers of the Saxon Life Regiment performed quite unusual services in this (assault;)' I (von Pape) personally conversed with several of the (saxon) gentlemen, being compelled to give them the same measure of praise as to my own troops."

In 1870, and today still as it seems, such examples were necessary to create and maintain a genuine and true comradeship between Prussians and Saxons. The fact that the left wing of the Guard urgently needed the help of the XIIth Corps in the seventh afternoon hour of the 18th of August and that Von Pape's aid, Second Lieutenant von Esbeck, called Von Platen, almost imploringly begged the Saxons to

¹Pape subsequently expressly stated that he was guided in this by military and political reasons. See the verbatim statement reprinted in *Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik*, vol. 5, p. 173, Note 1. (Page 251, ante.)

²Of the Life Guard Grenadier Regiment No. 100, Captains von Döring and von Klütchtzner, First Lieutenants von Grünwald and Krabitz ("the latter especially distinguished himself,") Second Lieutenant von Gregory and "an especially brave first sergeant, named Roll;" "of the Grenadier Regiment No. 101 Captain von Rouvroy and adjutant First Lieutenant von Schwanenwede and Second Lieu-

bring that help¹ is not admitted in 1906 by the Great General Staff, and, even during the day of the battle jealousy undoubtedly influenced the decisions of the highest leaders of the Guard. Major General von Dannenberg, chief of staff of the Guard Corps, replied to General von Kessel, who counselled that the defenders of St. Privat be first of all shaken or silenced by artillery and that the arrival of the XIIth Corps be awaited:

"We shall attack. If we do not take St. Privat the Saxons will get it ahead of us. The brigade (led by General von Kessel) will reap the harvest of today."²

General von Wittich sent word to the Guard Rifles shortly before five o'clock that the guard would advance

tenant Schneider; and also First Lieutenant von Werlhoff and Second Lieutenant Hauth. Coming farther from the west, between the 4th and 2d Guard Regiments, detachments of this regiment under Captains Hager and von Engel, First Lieutenants von Metsch and Kallenbach and several junior officers, among them Lieutenants von Schele, Siggel, Räber, von Pereira, Uhlemann, Ensign Schütze, First Sergeants Florey, Richter, Lommatzsch and others, pressed forward with greatest bravery.'

¹In the battle report of the 2d Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment No. 197 (War Archives, Box 1,575, Battle reports of the 2d Infantry Brigade No. 48) it is stated: "After half the distance (to Roncourt) had been covered an orderly officer of the Prussian Guard Hussar Regiment arrived who urgently entreated support in the charge on the village of St. Privat la Montagne. The 2d Battalion, in conjunction with the 1st Battalion, therefore advanced on St. Privat." The same, and in almost the exact language, is stated in the battle report of the 2d Grenadier Regiment No. 101 (War Archives, War diary of the 2d Grenadier Regiment No. 101.)

²*Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik*, vol. v, p. 410 (Page 300 ante). Count Pfeil recounts this exchange of words in his previously mentioned book, on page 44: "I reported to General von Kessel what I had seen. But immediately thereafter General von Dannenberg the almighty chief of staff of the Guard Corps, came riding up. We adjutants knew that the two generals were not on the best of terms and that the latter did not look with any great favor on our (1st Guard) regiment. Some distance away from us, both generals argued in evident excitement, during which argument General von Kessel several times pointed in the direction where the Saxons were." The charge on St. Privat was ordered and commenced. "We now found out what General Kessel had told the chief of staff in that heated discourse, namely that we ought to wait with the attack to give the Saxons time to come up." (p. 50.) Thus it appears that Prince Albert and Dannenberg were equally to blame for the premature advance and Lieutenant Colonel von Cämmerer is undoubtedly right in stating in his review of Foerster's book (*Forschungen zur brandenburger und preussischer Geschichte*, XXIV, 320-1): "Through incorrect selection of his place of observation Prince Frederick Charles was brought to approve the premature attack made by the Guard Corps, though up to that moment he had reckoned more on the effect of the simultaneous en-

about five o'clock to force the decision:¹ but according to the official Prussian account² the commanding general of the Guard Corps, Prince August of Württemberg, was induced to make the premature frontal attack mainly by the sudden silence of the French artillery and by movements of hostile detachments from Roncourt toward St. Privat, which led him to believe that the enemy was weakening himself in his main position, in order either to fall back upon Metz, or to throw himself upon Manstein's IXth Corps and break through there. Yet, according to the statements of Count von Pfeil,³ Prince August of Württemberg held the same views as General von Dannenberg and General von Wittich, namely, that other troops should not be allowed to dispute with the Prussian Guard the laurels of victory⁴ and it happened probably more by reason of this desire than by reason of the above mentioned consent of Prince Frederick Charles

velopment by the Saxons. Had he himself seen personally at the proper time and place that the Saxons were not yet far enough advanced to allow them to envelop the enemy, he surely would have withheld his approval of the attack by the Guard." The Prussian Minister of War, Bronsart von Schellendorff I., told Hans Delbrück that Prince August of Württemberg had ordered the attack and regretted the error committed by him until his death. Delbrück also states in 1911 in the 146th part of the Prussian *Jahrbücher* on page 530: "Prince Frederick Charles did not order the fatal attack, but merely gave his assent when asked by Prince August."

¹*Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik*, V. 466 (P. 329 ante.)

²*Ibid*, V, 376 et seq. (P. 273 ante). It is true that that work, on page 447 (Comments), also mentions "the awakening jealous desire to secure to the Guard Corps the fullest measure of participation in the expected victory." Von der Goltz says (in *Deutsche Rundschau* 1911, p. 337): "The day was declining and still the battle had to be decided before dark. There was no longer any opportunity for delay, consideration, waiting; neither could further reconnaissance be carried on. In the Guard Corps the decision had been made to storm St. Privat and Prince Frederick Charles approved that decision; all those near him felt like him and agreed with him." On the other hand, Prince August's decision was condemned by Major von Kunz (*Kriegsgeschichtliche Beispiele*, X, p. 30 et seq.), by General von Pape and by others.

³In *Vor Vierzig Jahren*, p. 50. "Neither the corps commander, Prince August of Württemberg, nor his chief of staff found it necessary to find out for themselves how far away the Saxons were; they believed that St. Privat was but weakly occupied; they did not have the artillery prepare the attack; and now they demanded that the assault against this completely intact and strong position should commence at once so that the Saxons would not reap the harvest."

⁴Crown Prince Albert and his chief of staff had given assurance that the attack of the Saxons on Roncourt might take place between 5 and 5.15 o'clock!

that the Prince remained as deaf to the well considered counsel of General Pape, who insisted on waiting, as did his chief of staff to General Kessel's advice. As is known, Otto von Bismarck openly and gruffly stated to Moritz Bush in Versailles concerning these events:¹

"At St. Privat the Guard unreasonably attacked out of sheer professional jealousy, and then, when it failed, it shifted the burden of blame onto the Saxon troops, who could not possibly have gotten up any quicker considering the long march, and who subsequently brought the Guard out of their dilemma with admirable bravery."

In conversation with Robert von Keudell, the Chancellor stormed equally against the chief of staff of the Guard Corps, who, "without waiting for the Saxons, intended to finish the matter alone," and whose method of throwing the best and picked troops, the Guard Rifles and Jägers, against the trenches of St. Privat not in skirmish order, but in column, he condemned as criminal.² Moltke, it is true held that much might be cited in justification of the errors committed and would not entertain Bismarck's demand that the Prince of Württemberg should be dismissed; but, on the other hand, he was fully cognizant of the merits of the commander of the XIIth Corps, as is proved by his recommendation to have him appointed commander of the Meuse. Later he said as is well known:

"Of all the generals in this great war the Crown Prince of Saxony understood me best. His leadership is signalized by two important qualities: absolute and intelligent obedience to supreme authority, and energy in execution. It was these two characteristic qualities

¹Moritz Busch, *Tagebuchblätter*, I, 575.

²Robert von Keudell, *Fürst und Fürstin Bismarck*, p. 452. King William appears to have been just as indignant. In the Diary of Field Marshal Count von Blumenthal, (Stuttgart & Berlin, 1902) he states on page 82: "Saturday, August 20, 1870. . . . The King was intensely strained by the fatigues of the campaign, and had become quite nervous. What affected him most were the terrible losses among the officers in the battle of the 18th. He complained bitterly that the officers of the higher grades appeared to have forgotten all that had been taught them so carefully in maneuvers, and had apparently all lost their heads; battles like that we could not stand for long." On August 21, 1870, Major Hans von Kretschman wrote to his wife: "The poor Guard! An insane leadership caused it to suffer losses which can never be made good; there are no depot battalions for the officers' corps." *Kriegsbriege aus den Jahren 1870-71*, by Hans von Kretschman, later General of Infantry, edited by Lily von Braun, née von Kretschman, page 70.)

that made the leadership of the Army of the Meuse by the Crown Prince so conspicuous."

Though in 1906 the *Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik* deny the Crown Prince the possession of the "strong, pitiless will of a leader" because he did not, in spite of the fatigue of the troops, obey the orders of Prince Frederick Charles to advance still on the evening of August 18 with at least one brigade to Woippy and there interrupt railroad and telegraph, it is only necessary to state in justification what Von Hodenberg stated in 1898 in regard to the delay of the pursuit that: The Crown Prince did not execute the orders of Prince Frederick Charles until early in the morning of the 19th because on account of the darkness and the forest, it could not be seen in what condition was the enemy, who still showed a strong artillery line. Crown Prince Albert and his Saxons performed what lay in their power to achieve the victory of St. Privat—with the possible exception of Conel von Montbé, who did not bring his brigade against the enemy quickly enough, and of some other subordinate leaders, as well as Lieutenant Colonel Schubert, who talked Prince George into making this envelopment too far reaching before knowing the strength of the enemy in Montois la Montagne. Every unprejudiced historian must consequently agree with the Prussian Captain Helmuth, who as early as 1873 condensed the result of his investigations in the following words:¹

¹Von Helmuth, *Die Preussischen Garden am 18. August 1870*. A lecture delivered before the Scientific Society of Berlin, February 22, 1873, page 69 (P. 28 ante.) According to *Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik*, V, 444, (P. 337 ante:) "at the close of the seventh hour only General von Kessel estimated the situation correctly. These men, who, with defiant bravery had lived through the worst battle crisis, stubbornly holding the captured position, were still imbued with the desire to get forward and it needed but little encouragement to carry them on." "General von Kessel felt that a decisive attack from the center of the position against the northwest corner of St. Privat gave the best promise of success . . . Undoubtedly the intrepid advance of the Guard had made the enemy uncertain and irresolute. General von Kessel could so far see nothing of the expected interference of the Saxons." (page 442) (page 325 ante.) On the other hand, Count Pfeil, who had been sent by General Kessel shortly before 6.30 to the Prince of Württemberg with the request for support, states in his recollections of the campaign: "My report (that the 4th Guard Regiment would soon advance on our left for support, for which, according to *Studien zur Kriegsgeschichte und Taktik*, it received orders about 6.30) reassured him (Kessel) somewhat in regard to the situation.

"As a matter of fact, the final decision in the heavy battle is to be credited to the interference of the Saxon Corps, not only to the pressure of its main masses but also to the heroic deeds of the battalions which directly entered the battle. The glory due to the Saxons must be accorded them without reservation. But just as joyfully will an unbiased judgment recognize that only in consequence of the self-sacrifice of the Guard the decision came with such suddenness and such far reaching consequences."

Field Marshal von der Goltz also says:¹

"At this late day we cannot say if delay by the Guard would have had the desired result; for the attack in front fostered and hastened the envelopment, which without that attack might have been beaten to St. Privat by darkness."

That valorous charge of the Guard, forced, I might say, Marshal Canrobert to mass his corps and to do without sufficient extension and security of his right flank; the envelopment of the latter, the prerequisite for German victory, was in thought an independent conception of Crown Prince Albert and its execution entirely the work of his army corps; the capture of the key of the hostile position, St. Privat, is therefore, though there might be something left to desire in the entire co-operation, due equally to Saxons and Prussians.

In conclusion let us examine how the Crown Prince viewed the entire work of the day immediately after the conclusion of the battle. It is true that this report, contained in his diary of August 18, is but a summary, but still a very characteristic one with all its brevity.

"At five o'clock in the morning," thus reads the report, "Frederick Charles assembled the corps commanders of the Guard and the 12th Corps with their chiefs of staff and issued his orders for the advance to us verbally. My corps was to form the leading, left, echelon; every unit in battle formation. We found no enemy as far as Jarny, leading me to the belief that he had withdrawn. At Jarny reports reached me that he stood in position at St. Privat. I started the 24th Division on

It was also seen that the Saxons were finally approaching." (*Vor Vierzig Jahren*, page 55.) Mention has already been made (G. von Schubert's *Lebenserrinerungen*, p. 495) of the passage of the French General Staff Account: "When the 48th Saxon Brigade appeared in the direction of Montois at about 6.15, threatening from the north the weak force at Roncourt, already hard pressed by the 45th Brigade, the commander of the 6th Corps felt that retreat to the Bois de Saulny was inevitable."

¹In the *Deutsche Rundschau*, March 1911.—Ed

Marie au chenes, the 45th Brigade on Coinville, holding the 46th Brigade in reserve; the corps artillery went to the heights west of Marie au chenes, to which point I also went. Arrived there, I saw the battle-field in my front; gradually rising slopes east of Marie au chenes and St. Privat, the highest point being marked by Doncourt¹ on the forest this side of Metz, formed the hostile position. After a short bombardment Marie was captured by the 47th Brigade in conjunction with the 1st Guard Division, and subsequently held against two very heavy counter attacks (executed by lines continuously firing). I left the village to the Guard and issued orders for the entire 23d Division to push forward from Coinville through Montois towards Roncourt, for which purpose I gave it the 4th Brigade as a reserve. The corps artillery went into position on the road north of Marie and advanced, as the 23d Division pushed forward, on Doncourt (Roncourt.—H.), which it captured by its fire. I rode on ahead and arrived just when the artillery (now 90 guns) went into position at Roncourt and fired on St. Privat, which had repulsed three attacks made by the Guard, causing them great loss. This artillery gave the Guard a breathing space. The 45th Brigade now pushed into the burning village with the Guard and held it. The 46th Brigade, with loud hurrahs, then approached the other side of the village and thereafter the battle ended in the darkness with a bombardment, doing small damage to us.

"I remained in the half ruined Doncourt (Roncourt). Glad of the victory we remained awake until toward midnight and refreshed ourselves on the things we found in the houses. In war we become callous; while we were happy the body of Colonel von Röder of the 1st Guard Regiment was lying immediately below our window. Poor Zeschwitz,² whom I had sent off to receive orders, fell in the darkness and broke his collar bone, also hurting his knee, so that he had to be carried back."

Assuredly pride speaks in these lines; the supposition that the Prussian Guard would have bled to death in the vain charge on St. Privat had not the Saxon XIIth Corps hastened to its relief, is evidently shared by Crown Prince Albert. But with how very few words he describes the interference first of the Saxon artillery, then of the infantry! How modestly does he mention or rather hide his own personal merit and how the last sentences especially touch our sympathies. He does not say that the envelopment of the hostile right flank sprang from his own initiative, nor that he offered to Prince August of Würtemberg his support in the assault on St. Privat, and had it declined; nor that he offered to the

¹Should read Roncourt.—Haake.

²Lieutenant Colonel von Zeschwitz, chief of staff of XIIth Corps.

lance corporal of the 1st Guard Regiment who requested the honor of being allowed to stand guard over the body of his dead colonel part of the very small amount of food which the victor found in the village—and, when he subsequently came to speak again of the 18th of August, he mentioned this incident, as Count Pfeil narrates,¹ only to laud as an excellent example of soldierly virtues that Prussian guardsman who declined to partake of food and drink by the side of the body of his dead commander. Such an example Prince Albert undoubtedly was himself; he was not only a leader of importance far exceeding the average leader, but also a true comrade with an unusually noble mind and heart. Through his fine tactfulness, through his unselfishness in thought and act, always aiming at the best for all, he gained in 1870-71 for the German cause not less merit than he did through his strategic leadership. As I have seen from the files of the Saxon War Archive and from the campaign diary of one of my regimental comrades, subsequent to August 18 minor conflicts frequently arose between Prussian and Saxon comrades in arms.² It would be an interesting task to set these forth from reliable sources, as well as the endeavors to overcome these conflicts; in which efforts Crown Prince Albert undoubtedly took a principle part, as in the battle of St. Privat. Among the Prussians, his efforts at reconciliation were supported, in first line, by General von Pape, Moltke and Bismarck—it is to be hoped that the critics on both sides of the question may bear this in mind. Ascertainment of the historical truth, will, as it is hoped this essay will show, go exceedingly well hand in hand with this.

¹ *Vor vierzig Jahren*, p. 65.

² Karl Strey, *Erinnerungen an den Krieg 1870-71*, published by me in the October number of the periodical *Soldatenfreund*, pp. 200 and 207.

Saxons and Prussians on the Day of the Battle of St. Privat¹

The charge of excessive slowness, made by Moltke in his history of the Franco-Prussian War, in reference to the XIIth Corps on August 18, 1870, may possibly be justified in so far as applies to the early morning hours; for, though Prince Frederick Charles issued his orders to the Second Army as early as five o'clock, and though Crown Prince Albert issued his orders to the XIIth Corps twenty minutes later, the advance guard of the Saxons did not start, in battle formation from Mars la Tour until seven o'clock, the main body of the 23d Division half an hour later, the 24th Division having to wait even longer. Speaking of this, the battle report of the 24th Division states: "The division started in obedience to orders at six o'clock in the morning to march into a battle position at Mars la Tour, which at that moment was taken up by the 23d Division, but which was to be evacuated by that division at once. This position, astride the road to Jarny north of Mars la Tour, was occupied as follows: the 46th Brigade and the artillery on the right side of the road, the 48th on the left side, the cavalry regiment being somewhat ahead on the right side of the road. The start from this position could not be made (in rear of the 23d Division and corps artillery) until about nine o'clock because the 47th Brigade was delayed by the narrow streets of Mars-la-Tour and arrived very late. One Guard division, which was to march behind the division to the right was thereby much to its annoyance, considerably delayed but without our being to blame. After ten o'clock the division encountered, in the narrow defile this side of Jarny, the corps artillery assembled in rear of the 23d Division, and took a position at Moncel Chateau in densely crowded columns on both sides of the road."

¹Reprint from *New Archives of Saxon History and Archaeology*, vol. XXXIII, parts 3 & 4. Supplement to preceding article.

The war diaries of the separate companies, battalions and regiments of the 47th Brigades vary extraordinarily in their accounts of the start from the bivouac. In the 48th Brigade seven o'clock is given by almost all organizations as the hour of starting—that would have been probably the regulation distance, as the start was made in march columns and executed by orders in that formation until the place of rendezvous north of Mars-la-Tour was reached.

I am unable to decide if any time could have been saved by taking up the battle formation at the very start; but it appears certain to me that on account of that very formation the advance from Mars-la-Tour to Jarny was delayed; and of that we have several proofs which cannot be questioned. The war diary of the 1st Battalion of the 104th Infantry Regiment states: "Start from Mars la Tour at 9 a.m; the 12th Jäger Battalion formed the advance guard. Only the led horses and ammunition wagons were to accompany the battalion. Advanced through the bottom, leading from Mars-la-Tour to Jarny, on the right wing of the regiment. An exceedingly hard march, as that bottom consisted for the most part of wet meadows traversed by deep ditches. There were still many dead Prussians and Frenchmen lying about, killed in the battle which had taken place here."

Dr. Helsig, Head Librarian of the Leipzig University, who participated in the War of 1870 as assistant first sergeant of the Reserve in the 102d Infantry Regiment, states in a letter: "According to my recollection we advanced there without interruption with exception that, marching in this brigade in battle formation, we had to halt several times for a short while enroute to reestablish the formation." Major Haase, reserve list, who served as ensign in 1870 in the 12th Field Artillery Regiment, wrote me—I give these excerpts from their letters by permission of the gentlemen mentioned—: "The advance was materially delayed by complying with the orders to march in mass of brigades. In the first place we had not practiced such march formation in peace time, and besides it could not be done in that terrain. The troops in several instances encountered obstacles which could be overcome or avoided by the infantry without having to break the formation, but which compelled the divisional artillery, which had orders to march with contracted battery fronts between the infantry brigades, to take up column formation, subsequently again deploying at the trot to gain their pre-

scribed formation. The corps artillery also, marching between the two divisions, was in many instances forced to assume column formation, deploying again subsequently."

"Concerning the comradeship existing between Saxons and Prussians," says Major General Haase, "there is no indication of antipathy according to my recollections; on the 18th of August we only had the depressing feeling that the crossing with the Guard Corps had been ordered to keep us away from the firing—in other words that we were not trusted."¹ Librarian Dr. Holssig gave me the following interesting information concerning this. "It is probably very natural that there existed at the start among the Saxon troops, who had fought against the Prussians four years before then, a certain amount of antipathy against the former enemy, that is, at least among those troops who in those days (1866) had been in the field. This was less the case with the officers than with the older noncommissioned officers. But the feeling soon disappeared. Even during the very first marches the perfect correctness of the dispositions taken by the Great General Staff had a great deal to do with this change of feeling, especially when comparisons were made with conditions obtaining in the Austrian campaign. And in addition, the Prussian troops, whenever we came together, met our men with such true comradeship, that even the most prejudiced were induced to change their previous opinions. Concerning the Guard especially, their military bearing, seen on the march, aroused our admiration. This admiration was increased even more in front of Paris where we were next to them on the investing line and where we frequently occupied outposts together, on which occasions we learned with what absolute faithfulness to duty and precision they performed their service. On that account we never felt any jealousy when the Guard let fall an expression like 'That surely was a day for the Guard!' when the 18th of August was being discussed."

Undoubtedly the Guard's valorous though premature attack on St. Privat conduced to shaking the enemy and preparing his final defeat. And no less must all Saxon participants in the battle express their warm thanks to the Guard for acknowledging clearly the decisive influence, brought by our Crown Prince through his initiative, on the outcome of the battle. (see my essay on Crown Prince

¹ Compare with this statement my particulars on page 103 to 106 of this volume. (P. 459 *ante*.)

Albert and Prince George of Saxony on August 18, 1870.)

I shall use this opportunity to correct an error in that essay (page 459, Note 2). The "little Planitz" mentioned by Crown Prince Albert in his war diary is, as I was informed by Chamberlain von Posern, not the Planitz who subsequently was minister of war, but his cousin, Charles Adolphe Ferdinand Edler von der Planitz, who was retired from active service in 1894 as major general and died in 1906, and who served in 1870 as first lieutenant, Guard Cavalry Regiment, on the staff of the commanding general of the XIIth Corps. Neither was my statement of page 134 (P. 459 *ante*) entirely correct; there I said: "that the left wing of the Guard urgently needed the help of the XIIth Corps toward 7 o'clock in the afternoon of the 18th of August and that von Pape's aide, Second Lieutenant von Esbeck, called von Platen, almost imploringly begged * * * " Mr. von Esbeck Platen, requested by me to point out errors in my work, replied as follows: "It is true that I *u r g e n t l y*, if you want to call it so, requested General von Craushaar for *flank* support of the Guard, but *n o t* for support in the attack on St. Privat; what I actually said to General von Craushaar (he being the first higher leader I met) was 'General, for the past hour the guard has been lying in front of St. Privat in the hottest kind of battle; it will hold its place but cannot advance unless it receives flank support', as I recollect as though it were today and to which I can make oath. I certainly was in a hurry and it is quite natural that I was excited considering the importance of the situation; but I did not 'for God's sake' pray to bring help to the Guard bleeding to death in front of St. Privat and I did not execute my mission 'imploringly.'—At that time I was confronted too much and almost exclusively by the military 'must' of the situation to allow myself any other emotions, which in any case I did not feel. Besides, entreaties were far from my mind for the reason that I had had no idea of asking sacrifices from my comrades in arms, but was far rather convinced that I brought them the highest fortune that can fall to a soldier's lot: a chance to get at the enemy."

The statement that, in the afternoon of the 18th of August, the decisions of the highest leaders were governed by feelings of jealousy, seem to Mr. von Esbeck as incredible as do Bismarck's expressions—as narrated by Moritz Busch and von Keudell—"which would, as could be subsequently

proved, contradict actual facts in so far as the Guard Jägers and Guard Rifles were concerned, as neither one of these battalions participated in the assault on St. Privat, the latter belonging to the 2d Guard Infantry Division and being engaged in a hot battle at Amanvillers." "According to my knowledge and conviction" he wrote me, "the attack of the Guard, spoken of as premature, was based on the certain belief that, if great feats were yet to be accomplished that day, five o'clock would be the very latest hour for starting the attack in order not to allow the numerically superior combined hostile forces to get away during the night, or pierce our lines. I was the first eyewitness on the hill near Jerusalem Ferme of the impression which the approach of the intact Saxon corps made on the enemy; for I saw that closed up French battalions (from the reserve, I suppose) marched off on the road to Metz. Thus there is absolute truth in the statement of Captain Helmuth that the pressure exerted by the mass of the Saxon Corps, together with the subsequent valorous deeds of the combatants, had the most honorable share in the great victory gained in the battle of St. Privat."

Appendix A

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

BOGUSLAWSKI, Lieutenant General, (*Albert Karl Friedrich Wilhelm von Boguslawski*)—Born in Berlin, 1834. Second Lieutenant 1854; First Lieutenant, 1862; participated in campaigns of 1864, 1866, and 1870-71 in 50th Infantry Regiment; Captain, 1867; Major, 1872; Lieutenant-Colonel, 1879; Colonel, 1883; Major General, 1888; Lieutenant General, 1890. Retired from active service December 9, 1890. Died in 1905.

Author of "Die Entwicklung der Taktik von 1793 bis zur Gegenwart" (1869); "Taktische Folgerungen aus dem Kriege 1870" (1872); "Ausbildung und Besichtigung" (1873); "Das Leben des Generals Dumouriez" (1879); "Entwicklung der Taktik seit dem Kriege 1870" (1879); "Die Fechtweisen aller Zeiten" (1880); "Die Hauptwaffe in Form und Wesen" (1880); "Der kleine Krieg und seine Bedeutung für die Gegenwart" (1881); "Unterweisung für das Verhalten des Infanteristen im Gefecht" (1882); "Anlage, Leitung und Durchführung von Feldmanövern" (1883); "Geschichte des 50. Regiments" (1883); "Taktische Darlegungen aus der Zeit von 1859 bis 1890" (1890); "Der Zug der Engländer gegen Copenhagen im Jahre 1801" (1890); "Notwendigkeit der zweijährigen Dienstzeit" (1891); "Der Krieg in seiner wahren Bedeutung für Staat und Volk" (1892); "Die Landwehr von 1813 bis 1893" (1893); "Der Krieg der Vendée gegen die französische Republik" (1894); "Vollkampf, nicht Scheinkampf" (1895); "Der Ehrbegriff des Offizierstandes" (1896); "Betrachtungen über Heerwesen und Kriegführung" and "Die Ehre und das Duell" (1897); "Volksheer, nicht Volkswehr" and "Das Fahrrard" and "Contra Bebel und Bleibtreu" (1898); "Hermine Lüdeking" (1899); "Armee und Volk im Jahre 1806" (1900); "Strategische Erförderungen" and "85 Jahre preussischer Regierungspolitik in Posen und West Preussen 1815 bis 1900" (1901); "Die Anti-Duellbewegung" (1902); "Taktische Folgerungen aus dem Burenkriege" and "Aus der preussischen Hof- und diplomatischen Gesellschaft" and "Aus bewegten Zeiten" (1903); "Nicht Rede aber Fehde wider die Sozialdemokratie" (1904)—besides numerous articles in Supplements of the *Militär Wochenblatt*, and in the *National-Zeitung* and *Tägliche Rundschau*.

BUDRITZKI, Lieutenant General Rudolf Otto von—Born in Trier in 1812. Cadet, 1827 to 1830; second lieutenant, 1830; captain, 1848.

Commanding Saxon contingent 1861 to 1864. Colonel 1864. Commanded 4th Guard Grenadier Regiment during the campaign against Denmark in 1864. Commanding 3d Guard Infantry Brigade during Austro-Prussian War of 1866. Commanding 2d Guard Infantry Division during Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71. Retired from active service in 1875 and died in 1876.

DANENBERG, Ferdinand von, General of Infantry.—Born in Mecklenburg-Schwerin in 1818. Cadet, 1833; second lieutenant, 1836; captain, 1852. Detailed to the Great General Staff 1859 to 1870. Chief of Staff of the Guard Corps during the Austro-Prussian War of 1866 and the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71. Major General 1872; Lieutenant General, 1875. Commanding IId Army Corps, 1881. General of Infantry, 1884. Retired from active service, 1887. Died in Berlin in 1893.

VON DER GOLTZ, Freiherr Colmar Wilhelm Leopold.—Born in 1843 in Prussia. Second Lieutenant of Infantry, 1861. Participated in Austro-Prussian War of 1866, severely wounded at Trautenau. Detailed to the Great General Staff in 1868. First Lieutenant, 1869. Served with headquarters, Second Army, during Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71. Captain, 1871. Duty with Great General Staff, 1878 to 1883. Joint compiler of Official Account of Franco-Prussian War during that time. Major, 1878. On leave from 1883 to 1895 in Turkey, where he held the rank of Major General, Division General and Field Marshal. Lieutenant Colonel, 1883; Colonel, 1887; Major General, 1891; Lieutenant General, 1896. Inspector General of engineer corps and fortresses 1898 to 1902. General of Infantry, 1900. Commanding 1st Army Corps, 1902 to 1907. Colonel General, 1908. Field Marshal, 1911. Retired from active service, 1913.

Author of: Operations of the Second Army to the Capitulation of Metz; The Seven Days of Le Mans; Operations of the Second Army on the Loire; Leon Gambetta and His Army; The Nation in Arms; Rossbach and Jena; A Trip to Macedonia; Journeys in Anatole; The War in Thessaly and the Turkish Army; The Conduct of War; Military History of Germany in the 19th Century.

GROLMANN, Wilhelm von, General of Infantry.—Born in Silesia in 1829. Private 1st Guard Infantry Regiment 1847; 2d Lieutenant, 1849; 1st Lieutenant, 1858; captain 3d Guard Infantry Regiment, 1861; chief of staff of 10th Division, 1866; major, 1866; participated in Austro-Prussian War of 1866; Lieutenant Colonel, 1870; participated in Franco-German War of 1870-71, commanding the 4th Guard Regiment. Colonel, 1872; Major General, 1877 and commanding 3d Guard Infantry Brigade; Lieutenant General, 1882 and commanding 8th Division. Commanding IVth Army Corps, 1887 to 1888; General of Infantry and commanding XIth Army Corps, 1888 to date of retirement, November 18, 1892. Died in Barzdorf, 1893.

HELMUTH, Arnold H. Military Writer.—Born in Brunswick in 1857.

After completing cadet course in Erfurt Academy, appointed second lieutenant 27th Prussian Infantry Regiment. Student officer, War College, 1861 to 1864. Participated in Austro-Prussian War of 1866 as first lieutenant. Detailed to duty with the Great General Staff in 1867 and attached to military-history section. Relieved from that duty in 1868 on being promoted captain. Participated in Franco-Prussian War, commanding his company; distinguishing himself at Beaumont, by defeating with his company the attack of an entire regiment of Cuirassiers. Re-detailed to the Great General Staff in 1871, as chief of military-history section. Promoted to major and assigned to duty as Chief of Staff of the 22d Division, 1875. Died in 1878 at the age of 41. Author of: History of the 4th Magdeburg Infantry Regiment No. 27; Military Traditions of the Berg Garrison; The Battles of Vionville-Mars la Tour; The Prussian Guard on August 18, 1870; Sedan; Three Lectures on the Battle of St. Privat; Joint compiler of the German Official Account of the Franco-Prussian War.

HODENBERG, von, Freiherr.—Captain of Infantry from 1866 to 1870. During the Franco-Prussian War on the general staff of King Albert of Saxony. Later for many years adjutant general to King Albert. Died in 1903 as Major General of Infantry.

HOHENLOHE-INGELFINGEN, Prince Kraft zu.—Born in 1827 in upper Silesia. Second Lieutenant, 1845. Student, Artillery and Engineer School, 1845-46. Student, War College, 1851-53. 1st Lieutenant, 1854, and military attaché at Vienna to 1856. Personal Adjutant of the King, 1856 to 1864. Major, 1858; lieutenant colonel, 1861; colonel, 1865. Participated in Austro-Prussian campaign of 1866 as commander of the reserve artillery of the Guard Corps. Major General, 1868 and commander of Guard Corps Artillery Brigade. Participated as such in Franco-German War of 1870-71. Inspector of artillery, 1871. Lieutenant General and commanding 12th Division, 1873 to 1879. Inspector General of Artillery same year to date of retirement, 28th November, 1879. General of Infantry, 1883. General of Artillery, 1889. Died in 1892. Author of Letters on Strategy, Artillery, Infantry and Cavalry.

KESSEL, Bernhard Heinrich Alexander von, General of Infantry. Born in Breslau in 1817. Entered army in 1835, joining 1st Guard Infantry Regiment and served in that regiment through all grades to colonel. Participated in wars of 1866 and 1870-71, greatly distinguishing himself in leading his regiment in both wars. Author of: Practical Training of the Prussian Infantry Battalion; Tasks of our Infantry Battalions and Brigades. Retired from active service in 1879 and died in 1882.

KLENCK, von, Captain of Cavalry.—Served in the Saxon Corps in the 1870 campaign, during which he received the Iron Cross, Sept. 1870, and in Nov. the Ritterkreuz of the Military Order of St. Henry.

KRETSCHMAR, von, Colonel.—At the time of the Franco-Prussian War, first lieutenant and adjutant to the artillery commander of the Saxon Corps.

MANSTEIN, General Albrecht Ehrenstein Gustave.—Born in 1805. Entered the army in 1822. First saw field service in 1864 commanding the 6th Brandenburg Division in the Campaign against Denmark. Participated in the Austro-Prussian War of 1866, commanding the same division. Commanded the 9th Army Corps during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71. Retired from active service in 1873 and died in 1877.

PAPE, Alexander von, General Field Marshal.—Born in Berlin in 1813. Served nearly all his life in the Guard Corps. Second lieutenant, 1831; captain, 1856; major, 1860, colonel, 1863; major general, 1866. Commanding 2d Guard Infantry Brigade during Austro-Prussian campaign of 1866. Commanding 1st Guard Division during Franco-Prussian campaign of 1870-71. General of Infantry, 1880 and Governor of Berlin to date of retirement in 1892. Died in 1895.

RHEINBABEN, General of Cavalry, Albert von.—Born in Breslau in 1813. Cadet, 1827; second lieutenant, 1830, first lieutenant, 1846. Adjutant at headquarters 6th Army Corps, 1849. Member of the Great General Staff, 1850 to 1857. Commanding 1st Cavalry Brigade during the Austro-Prussian campaign of 1866. Commander of the 9th Division, 1868 to 1870. Lieutenant General and commanding 5th Cavalry Division during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71. Inspector General of Military Education to 1880, when he retired from active service. Died in 1880.

SCHIMFF, von, Colonel.—First Lieutenant in the Saxon army in 1867. In 1868 made with Schubert and others a reconnaissance along the Franco-German frontier. First lieutenant of Mounted Guards in 1870. During the Franco-Prussian War served on the staff of King Albert and later became Chamberlain at the Saxon court. He was detailed on the Great General Staff during the time when the account of the battles around Metz were being drawn up. Author of "*Das XII. Korps in Kriege 1870-71.*"

SCHUBERT, Gustav, later, von Schubert. Born in Leipzig, 1824. Cadet and second lieutenant Foot Artillery, 1843. Battery commander, 1861-5. On General Staff in 1885 for second time. Detailed to lecture to General Staff and War College on American Civil War. During the Franco-Prussian War Chief of Staff of the XIIth Army Corps (Saxon). Retired, 1887. Died, 1907.

VOIGTS-RHETZ, Constantin Bernard von, General of Infantry.—Born in Brunswick in 1809. Second Lieutenant, 1829. Detailed at War College 1833 to 1836. On duty in topographical bureau, 1837 to 1838. First lieutenant, 1840. Detailed on duty with Great Gen-

eral Staff in 1841. Captain, 1842; major, 1847 and adjutant of the Vth Army Corps to 1850. Chief of Staff of the Vth Army Corps, 1852. Lieutenant colonel, 1853; colonel, 1855 and commanding the 19th Infantry Regiment. Major General, 1858 and commanding 9th Infantry Brigade. Lieutenant General, 1863 and commanding 7th Infantry Division. Chief of staff of the First Army during Austro-Prussian War of 1866. Governor General of Hanover, 1866-67. Commanding Xth Army Corps, 1868. General of Infantry, 1868. Commanding Xth Army Corps during Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71. Retired from active service in 1873. Died in Wiesbaden in 1877.

WITTICH, Frederick William von, Lieutenant General.—Born in Westphalia in 1818. Cadet, 1831; second lieutenant, 1835. Student at War College 1840 to 1843. Captain and company commander, 1844 to 1857. Colonel and chief of staff of 5th Army Corps to 1866. Participated as such in Austro-Prussian War of 1866. Commanding 5th Infantry Brigade, 1866 to 1867. Commanding 50th and 49th Infantry Brigades, 1867 to 1871. Participated as commander of the 49th Brigade in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71. Lieutenant General and commander of the 22d Infantry Division, September, 1870. Died October 2, 1884.

Appendix B

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

French

THE FRENCH GENERAL STAFF ACCOUNT.—First published in the *Revue d'histoire, rédigée à l'Etat-Major de l'Armée*, Volumes XIV-XVI, 1904. Reprinted in book form in 1905 by Chapelot et Cie, 30 Rue et Passage Dauphin, *La Guerre de 1870-71, Les Opérations autour de Metz du 13 au 18 Août, III, Journées des 17 et 18 Août, Bataille de St. Privat*. The volume of documents annexes (pp. 529) and the maps are indispensable for the study of the French side, though lacking in critical notes.

HISTOIRE DE LA GUERRE DE 1870-1871, TOME V, REZONVILLE ET SAINT-PRIVAT, By **Pierre Lehautcourt** (Général Palat), Berger-Levrault et Cie. 5, Rue des Beaux-Arts, Paris. This work is recommended as the best general critical history. The author combines a knowledge of historical method with sound military appreciation. The General Staff Vol. 5 of Studies in Military History and Tactics, the 18th of August, had, however, not yet appeared when Lehautcourt's Tome V was written.

LA MANOEUVRE DE SAINT-PRIVAT, by **General H. Bonnal**.—Published by Chapelot et Cie., 1912; preface dated December 1911. This (3d) volume deals with the battle itself; the two previously published, with the preliminaries to include August 16th. It consists of a detailed narrative of the events of August 17th, 18th and 19th, with running comment; a chapter on the supply of the German army throughout the campaign, and one of general comment, follow. Specific citations are almost entirely lacking, but the writer evidently relies chiefly upon French official documents and a few French memoirs. He has also used to a considerable extent the German Official Accounts and the German General Staff monograph on "Aug. 18." In several instances he criticizes sharply these two accounts. His praise and blame are impartially distributed, Moltke receiving much of the former, and the French high command, especially Bazaine, much of the latter.

FRANÇAIS ET ALLEMANDS, by **Dick de Lonlay**.—Garnier Frères, 6, Rue des Saint Pères, Paris, 1888-1891.

An "Histoire Anecdotique" in four large volumes, illustrated in colors; volumes III and IV contain the description of Saint-Privat. Although it is intended chiefly as a popular history, the author

gives a bibliography of the earlier published material, quotes numerous documents and has evidently written with great care. This work is widely quoted and contains considerable material not found elsewhere or difficult of access.

L'ARTILLERIE DANS LA BATAILLE DU 18 AOUT, By Lt. Colonel Gabriel Rouquerol.—Published by Berger-Levrault et. Cie., 1906.

The author is a well known officer of French Field Artillery, the writer of several books on artillery, both technically and historically treated. This book is not primarily one of history, but rather of applied history; it seeks lessons for the French artillerist and finds them in the historical events discussed. Organization and armament are treated at some length, as an introduction; the narrative is brief and general as regards infantry, full and detailed as regards artillery. The comment is mostly incorporated with the narrative, the final summing up being very brief. One special chapter of some interest is that on artillery ammunition supply. The principal authorities are the French and German official accounts; regimental histories, etc., are used to considerable extent. The provision of maps is unusually great, and the utility of each one is multiplied by the numerous outlines of troop positions, drawn on thin paper, to be superposed on the maps proper.

ETUDES SUR LE 18 AOUT 1870, By Captain Roy.—Published by Berger-Levrault, 1911. A reprint from the *Revue Militaire Générale*. General Langlois contributes a preface, praising the work highly and emphasizing the writer's principal conclusions — the necessity of the aggressive spirit and of the tactical connection of arms. The French and German official accounts are the foundation of the narrative; the German General Staff monograph is frequently referred to. Memoirs and magazine articles are occasionally cited. Besides the usual maps, there are several good panoramic views, giving an excellent idea of the appearance of parts of the battlefield.

Belgian

ETUDES DE TACTIQUE SUR LA BATAILLE DE ST. PRIVAT by W. de Heusch. Published at Liege, 1896. A reprint from *Revue de l'Arme Belge*. The writer was a Major of Belgian Grenadiers, and formerly professor of Military Art and History at the Ecole Militaire, Brussels. The book is in the general form of old classic treatises on strategy and tactics: gives outline of events and then series of comments. Constantly refers to Belgian regulations, and seeks to deduce lessons for the Belgian army. Rarely mentions an authority, but refers occasionally in a general way to Moltke's Memoirs and the Prussian Official Account. Appears to follow last named authority chiefly for the facts. Book is a tactical study rather than an historical monograph.

Russian

CAUSES DES SUCCÈS ET DES REVERS DANS LA GUERRE DE 1870, By de Woyde, Lieutenant General, Russian Army.—French translation, two volumes and atlas, published by R. Chapelot et Cie, Paris, 1900. Also published in German translation. The original work was published in Russian in 1890 but the author corrected and revised the German translation of his work in 1898, from which the French translation is made. The work is keenly critical from a military standpoint and much in vogue in the German army. The author's sources of information are limited but he makes good use of those known to him.

Swiss

DER KRIEG UM DIE RHEINGRENZE, 1870, By W. Rüstow, Colonel, Swiss Army, Zürich, 1870.—This book possesses an interest owing to the date of publication, contemporaneous with the war, and the fact that the author had access to the German documents (he quotes von Moltke's and gives the substance of Prince Frederick Charles' orders for August 18) and evidently gives the German official view at that time. It is well mapped but gives no sources or critical notes.

German

DAS FRANZOESISCHE GENERALSTABSWERK UEBER DEN KRIEG 1870—71: WAHRES UND FALSCHES. By E. V. Schmid. Published at Leipiz, 1907. The writer was a German (Württemberg) colonel retired; he died before publication, and probably before giving final revision to his manuscript; the editor claims to have made changes only in case of obvious errors. He gives the events in much detail, referring to both French and German Official Accounts, and to a great number of memoirs, periodicals, etc., chiefly German but frequently French. In using this book it will be well to remember that it is what its name indicates — a critical examination of the French Official Account. But its form is that of an independent narrative, it is written in a dispassionate style, notes approval as well as disapproval, and always cites the authority upon which its statements are made.

GERMAN OFFICIAL ACCOUNT, *Der Krieg, 1870-71.*—Five volumes text, three boxes of maps, Berlin, 1873-78, to be had translated into both French and English. This work is indispensable for the study of this war. It is carefully edited with a view to the suppression of uncomfortable data and to distribute praise and blame according to political needs at the time of writing. In this respect it represents a sort of middle official view, already at variance with some of the earlier published accounts, but much more liberal than the later 1905 study. It quotes many orders and messages. The accuracy with which these have been produced as well as many statements of fact in the text have been widely disputed. It gives practically no references to sources and no critical notes.

HISTORY OF THE FRANCO-GERMAN WAR OF 1870-71, By Field Marshal Count Helmuth von Moltke, Berlin, 1891.—To be had in English translation. This is a condensed account, the chief interest of which lies in its having been written by the military director of the war on the German side. It is a most guarded and conservative statement and little more than a condensation of the German Official Account.

There are numerous tactical studies in German on "examples" from military history, some based on independent research and others written on an acceptance of the Official Account as representing the facts. Among the independents, Kunz, *Kriegsgechichtliche Beispiele aus dem deutsch-französischen Krieg von 1870-71*, is perhaps the best. He gives no reference to sources or critical notes but is widely quoted by German military writers as an historical authority. Heft 10 of his series (1899) is devoted exclusively to Saint Privat. He gives a list of titles of "works consulted" at the end, including many regimental histories both French and German.

A noteworthy tactical study based on the official accounts is that by von Scherff, General of Infantry, *Kriegslehren in kriegsgeschichtlichen Beispielen der Neuzeit*, the 3d Heft of which is devoted to Saint Privat.

Another recent tactical study on "The French 6th Corps at St. Privat" by General von Gossler, based on the German and French official accounts and dealing chiefly with the leadership of Bazaine and Canrobert will be found in the *Vierteljahrshefte für Truppenführung und Heereskunde*, 1914, No. 2.

Index

AMANVILLERS—Evacuated by French (Helmuth).....	34
Fight raging in sunken road near—(Helmuth).....	30
Breaking off the fight on ridge of—(Helmuth).....	34
Captured by General Manstein at dark (Helmuth) 6, (18th of August).....	337
Final assault on ridge at 7.30 p.m. (Helmuth).....	33
French counter attacks on are defeated (18th of August)	333
French evacuate positions west of (18th of August)	340
General Wittich's charges against sunken road near—(Helmuth)	32
Hessian Guard Jägers relieved by Kaiser Alexander Regiment (Helmuth)	31
3d Guard Brigade charges ridge at (Helmuth) 29, (18th of August)	329
ARTILLERY OPERATIONS—Artillery did not play a material part in the pursuit (18th of August)	372
Artillery of IIId and IXth Corps support attack of 3d Guard Brigade on Amanweiler (18th of August)	366
Artillery preparation on Ste. Marie (Schimpff)	175
At Roncourt (Schimpff)	193
Changes of position after fall of Ste. Marie (Schimpff).....	183
Correction of different accounts of (Kretschmar)	393-400
General account August 18th (Hohenlohe) 94, (18th of August)	258
German artillery interferes in battle at Ste. Marie (18th of August)	258
Guard batteries accompany advance of Guard Infantry (18th August).....	292
Guard batteries go into position north and south of St. Privat (18th of August)	371
Guard batteries in action south of St. Ail (18th of August)	241
Guard batteries open fire on St. Privat (18th of August)	362
Guard batteries southeast of St. Ail advance to support the infantry attack (18th of August).....	285
On ridge southwest of St. Privat after fall of village (Schimpff)	211
Positions of batteries along Ste. Marie—Aboué road (Schimpff)	189
Saxon batteries go into action northwest of Ste. Marie (Hodenberg)	139
Saxon batteries in fight at forest of Jaumont (18th of August)	357
Saxon batteries join in bombardment of St. Privat at 7.45 p.m. (Helmuth)	36
Saxon batteries open fire on Roncourt 5.45 p.m. (Schubert)	413
Saxon batteries prepare attack on Ste. Marie (18th of August)	250
Saxon batteries support the attack of the 1st Guard Infantry Brigade (18th of August).....	305
Support of infantry attack on St. Privat (Helmuth).....	23

BAZAINE, MARSHAL—Estimate of the situation, August 16, 1870 (Helmuth)	1
BERGER, GENERAL—Attack orders to 4th Guard Brigade at 5.15 p.m. (18th of August)	280
VON BISMARCK, PRINCE OTTO—Opinion of premature attack of the Guard Corps (Haake)	462
BÖHN, COLONEL—Killed south of St. Privat (Helmuth)	15
BOIS DE LA CUSSE—Stubbornly held by 9th Corps (Helmuth)	6
BUDRITZKY, GENERAL—Gives signal for final assault on St. Privat (Helmuth)	36
CANROBERT, MARSHAL—Concentrates his forces around and in St. Privat (Helmuth) 34, (Schimpff)	195
Requests Bazaine to send reinforcements (Schimpff) 194, (18th of August)	262
CASUALTIES—German armies, August 18th (Goltz)	82
German and French forces (Schimpff) 212, note, (Helmuth) 42, (Boguslawski)	127
Second Army, August 18th (Goltz)	82
25th (Hesse) Division, August 18th (Wittich)	88
23d Division, August 18th (Schubert)	416
CAVALRY—Destroys railroad and telegraph between Metz and Thionville (Klenck)	103
CAVALRY CHARGE—Against abandoned French position held by 1st Guard Infantry Brigade (18th of August)	316
CAVALRY DIVISIONS—Operations on August 18th (Hohenlohe)	89
CLOSE OF THE BATTLE and assembly of the Germans (Helmuth) ...	41
COMMUNICATION—Lack of between different army headquarters (Leipziger Zeitung)	375
CONCENTRATION OF GERMAN ARMIES, August 17th (Helmuth)	2
CRAUSHAAR, GENERAL—Abandons project of assaulting Roncourt to support the Guard at St. Privat (Helmuth)	35
Advances with his brigade from the west on Roncourt (Helmuth) ...	34
Initiative in attack on Ste. Marie (Haake)	445
Killed near St. Privat (Helmuth) 35, (Schubert)	416
CROSSING OF TROOPS—Prince Frederick Charles' reasons for caus- ing (Haake)	430
CROWN PRINCE ALBERT OF SAXONY—Decides to start from Jarny in spite of army orders binding him to that place (Schimpff) ...	163
163, (18th of August) 232, (Haake)	439
Decides to envelop enemy's right wing (Hodenberg) 137, (Schimpff) 166, (18th of August) 247, (Schubert) 409, (Haake) 447	448
Dispositions for march from Jarny (Haake)	439
Establishes his headquarters in Roncourt (Helmuth)	42
Extract of diary covering movements of 12th Corps on August 17th (Haake)	425
Issues orders at 11.30 a.m. in Jarny for the march (Schimpff) ..	162

CROWN PRINCE ALBERT OF SAXONY—(continued)

March dispositions of his corps at 11.30 a.m. (Hodenberg)	133
Official report of attack on St. Privat (Haake)	464
Orders dated 2 p.m. for enveloping movement (18th of August) 248, (Schubert)	409
Orders dated 11.30 a.m. to march on St. Marie (Hodenberg)	135
Orders for the march at 5.20 a.m. (Schimpff)	160
Orders to XIIth Corps dated 5.20 and 5.45 a.m. (18th of August)	217
Orders to XIIth Army Corps dated 2 p.m. (Schimpff)	166
Perceives the extension of hostile position beyond St. Privat to Roncourt (Goltz)	69
Proceeds to Roncourt at 5.30 p.m. (Hodenberg)	143
Receives, in Jarny, Prince Frederick Charles' orders at 10 and 10.15 a.m. (Schimpff)	161
Report of 11.45 a.m. to army headquarters (Hodenberg)	133
Reports corps' arrival on Metz—Etain road to headquarters (Schimpff)	161
Reports from Jarny at 11.45 a.m. that Ste. Marie is occupied by enemy (18th of August) note	234
Reports his decision to army headquarters to attack Ste. Marie and to envelop French right wing at 3 p.m. (Boguslawski) 120, (18th of August)	246
Reports his movement on Ste. Marie to army headquarters (Schimpff)	166
Reports to army headquarters at 11.45 a.m. his march on Ste. Marie (Schimpff)	162
Rides toward Roncourt at 6.30 p.m. (Helmuth)	34
Takes station on Hill 842 (Shimpff)	165
Verbatim report to army headquarters dated 2.30 p.m. (Hoden- berg)	138
Verbatim copy of orders to the 12th Corps for the 18th of August (Haake)	431
DIRINGHOFEN BRIGADE, 10TH CORPS—Arrives at St. Privat from St. Ail (Helmuth)	41
DONCOURT—Guard Corps arrives at (Helmuth) 4, (Goltz)	60
Reported free of the enemy at 8.50 a.m. (18th of August) 224, (Goltz)	53
EIGHTH ARMY CORPS—Receives orders from General Steinmetz to occupy localities evacuated by IXth Corps (18th of August)	236
ENVELOPING MOVEMENT—Account of movement (Hodenberg)	141
Column attacks Roncourt (Helmuth) 34, (Schubert)	414
Column occupies Roncourt at 6.30 p.m. (Goltz) 75, (Schubert) ..	414
Column reaches Montois la Montagne at 6 p.m. (Helmuth) 34, (Goltz)	75
Column turns against St. Privat for attack (Helmuth)	34
Completion of (18th of August)	346
Criticized as not sufficiently far reaching (Leipziger Zeitung) ..	390

ENVELOPING MOVEMENT—(continued)

Crown Prince Albert issues his orders for (18th of August)	248
Decided on by Crown Prince Albert of Saxony (Hodenberg)	
137, (Schimpff) 166, (18th of August) 247, (Schubert) 409,	
(Haake) 447	448
Discussion as to slowness in execution of (Haake) 449	450
Discussion how it could have been hastened (Haake)	456
Extended farther northward (Schimpff) 190, (18th of August)	
263, (Schubert) 412	412
46th Brigade blamed for slowness in execution (Haake)	450
Initial steps for (Haake)	438
Prince George of Saxony's measures for extension of (Schimpff) 190	
Saxon column appears on plateau near Montois at 6 p.m.	
(Schimpff)	196
Started at 5 p.m. by 23d Division (Schubert)	412
Strength of enveloping column (Hodenberg)	140
ERCKERT, COLONEL—Killed at Ste. Marie (Helmuth)	11
V. ESBECK, LIEUTENANT—Appeals to Saxons for support of the	
Guard (Helmuth) 35, (18th of August)	350
Comment on his action urging the Saxons to support the	
Guard Corps (Leipziger Zeitung)	388
ESTIMATE OF THE SITUATION—Criticism of Prince Frederick	
Charles' (Leipziger Zeitung)	382
Differences in, held by von Moltke and Prince Frederick	
Charles (18th of August)	224
General von Pape at about 5 p.m. (18th of August)	297
General von Pape at 7 p.m. (18th of August)	325
Guard Corps and Second Army, at 5 p.m. (18th of August)	273
General von Moltke (Helmuth)	2
General von Moltke changes his between 9 and 10 a.m. (Haake) 437	
Marshal Bazaine, August 17th (Helmuth)	1
Prince August of Württemberg (Helmuth) 13-14, (18th of	
August)	273
Prince August of Württemberg at 7 p.m. (18th of August)	326
Prince Frederick Charles (Goltz) 48, (18th of August)	273
FIRST ARMY—Commences battle at 12.45 p.m. (18th of August) . . .	236
Position of, August 18th (Boguslawski)	115
Reports departure of enemy and proceeds to the attack (18th	
of August)	235
FIRST GUARD INFANTRY DIVISION—Situation of at 7 p.m. (18th of	
August)	325
FIRST GUARD INFANTRY BRIGADE—Attack of, divides itself on	
Roncourt and St. Privat (18th of August)	307
Begins attack against ridge from Ste. Marie (Helmuth)	19
Enters abandoned French position and defeats charge of	
French cavalry (18th of August)	314
Executes right turn against ridge of St. Privat (Helmuth)	20

FIRST GUARD INFANTRY BRIGADE—(continued)	
Location at 5.30 p.m. (18th of August)	299
Location and condition of at about 7 p.m. (18th of August)	317
Unable to press attack against ridge home (Helmuth).....	20
Starts for St. Privat at 5.45 p.m. (18th of August).....	303
FIRST GUARD DIVISION—March of, to Auboué is stopped at Ste.	
Marie (18th of August).....	241
Prepares for attack on Ste. Marie (18th of August)	246
Starts from Doncourt to Habonville (18th of August)	231
Storms south front of Ste. Marie (18th of August)	253
FORTY-FIFTH BRIGADE—Occupies Roncourt (Goltz) 75, (Schubert) 414	
Takes possession of the woods of Auboué (18th of August)	265
FORTY-SIXTH BRIGADE—Blamed for slowness during enveloping	
movement (Haake).....	450
FOURTH GUARD BRIGADE—Attacks St. Privat (Goltz) 76, (18th of	
August).....	280
Captures French position along hedge road (18th of August) ..	288
Captures Hill 321 southwest of St. Privat (18th of August)	282
Charge against ridge south of St. Privat (Helmuth) 15, 18.....	27
Description of its battlefield, 5 p.m. (18th of August)	278
Location of units at 5 p.m. (18th of August).....	280
Starts attack on St. Privat (18th of August).....	280
FOURTH GUARD REGIMENT—Assaults St. Privat from the north	
(Helmuth).....	38
Attacks northwest corner of St. Privat (18th of August)	323
In battle north and east of St. Privat (18th of August)	258
Joins Saxons in assault on St. Privat (Helmuth)	35
Reinforces left wing from Ste. Marie (Helmuth).....	26
Sent to support left wing of 1st Guard Brigade (18th of August) 320	
FRENCH ARMY—Effective strength, August 18th (Schimpff), note 169	
Location of corps, morning of August 17th (Schimpff)	170
Location of corps on August 18th (Goltz), note	53
Positions between Roncourt and St. Privat (Schimpff).....	188
Loses heights southwest of St. Privat (18th of August).....	294
GENERAL SITUATION—Review of the situation of the IId Army up	
5 p.m. (18th of August).....	270
GRAVELOTTE, FRENCH CAMP AT—Observation officer sent by IId	
Army reports movements in, at 6.40 a.m. and 8.45 a.m.	
(Goltz)	51
Outposts report movements in, at 4.50 a.m. and at 5.15 a.m.	
(Goltz)	51
Reported unoccupied by outposts of 18th Division (Goltz)....	51
Strength of troops (Goltz).....	52
GROEBEN, CAPTAIN VON DER—Reports Ste. Marie and St. Privat	
occupied by enemy (18th of August).....	231
GUARD CORPS—Advances against St. Privat at 5.30 p.m. (Goltz) 74,	
(Hohenlohe).....	98
Arrives at Doncourt at 10 a.m. (Helmuth) 4, (Goltz).....	60

GUARD CORPS—(continued)

Arrives at Habonville at 1 p.m. (Goltz)	67
Attacks St. Privat (18th of August)	270
Bivouacs at Hannonville au Passage (Goltz)	47
Commences deployment at Doncourt at 10.25 a.m. (Hodenberg)	133
Delayed at Mars la Tour (18th of August)	220
Directed to carry on battle with artillery only (Goltz)	67
Estimate of the situation at St. Privat at headquarters (18th of August)	273
1st Division storms south front of Ste. Marie (18th of August)	253
Independently changes march direction from Vernéville to Habonville (Goltz)	65
March from Doncourt and Bruville to Habonville (Helmuth) 5, (18th of August)	239
March of, to Auboué comes to a halt at Ste. Marie (18th of August)	241
Occupies Habonville with its advance guard (18th of August)	243
Ordered to attack Ste. Marie from Amanvillers (Goltz)	61
Ordered to halt at Doncourt, at 8.35 a.m. (Goltz)	54
Ordered to march on Amanvillers instead of Vernéville (Goltz)	63
Ordered to march on Vernéville (Goltz) 58 (Hodenberg)	133
Reaches Mars la Tour toward 6 a.m.; forced to halt by Saxons marching through (Helmuth)	3
Receives orders to march to Doncourt and support the IXth Corps (18th of August)	226
Reports at 11.30 a.m. from Doncourt that St. Privat is occupied by enemy (18th of August) note	234
Reports its attack on St. Ail and Ste. Marie at 2 p.m. (Goltz) ..	69
Requests 12th Corps to advance on Ste. Marie (Haake)	445
Resumes march from Mars la Tour (Helmuth)	3
Starts attack on St. Privat at 5 p.m. (Schimpff)	193
Starts from Hannonville at 5.30 a.m. (Boguslawski)	118
To attack hostile right wing from Amanvillers (Boguslawski) ..	119
GUARD CORPS ARTILLERY—Accompanies infantry attack on St. Privat (Hohenlohe)	
Advances from position at Habonville—St. Ail against St. Privat at 4 p.m. (Goltz)	71
Advances St. Ail to support infantry attack (18th of August) ..	285
All batteries hasten to ridge south of St. Privat when the infantry enters the village (Helmuth)	39
Attacked three times by French infantry from Amanvillers (Hohenlohe) 100	101
Carries on delaying action from 2 to 5 p.m. at St. Privat (Hohenlohe)	97
Formed in two groups on ridge at Amanvillers (Helmuth) 25 ..	26
Goes into position at St. Ail (Boguslawski)	120
Goes into position at Habonville (Helmuth)	7

GUARD CORPS ARTILLERY—(continued)

Guard Batteries accompany advance of Guard Infantry from between St. Ail and Ste. Marie (18th of August)	292
Opens fire on Ste. Marie aux Chênes (Helmuth) 10, (Hohenlohe) 98, (18th of August)	241
Opens fire on St. Privat at 7 p.m. (Boguslawski)	126
Receives orders to prolong artillery line of 9th Corps (Goltz) ..	66
Silences French artillery at St. Privat and Amanvillers (Hohenlohe) 101, (Boguslawski)	121
Three batteries take position on ridge at Amanvillers (Helmuth) 18, 25 (Hohenlohe)	99
Turns its entire activity against St. Privat (Goltz) 76, (Hohenlohe)	98

GUARD CORPS CAVALRY— Account of destruction of Metz—Thionville railroad and telegraph (Klenck)	112
Arrives on battlefield at 2 p.m. (Klenck)	111
Bivouacs night of August 17-18 between Parfondrupt and St. Jean les Buzy (Klenck)	111
Crosses Mosel August 16th (Klenck)	103
March to Cheminot August 15th (Klenck)	103
Operations from August 15th to 18th (Klenck)	103
Reports that French left Doncourt (Goltz)	53

GUARD GRENADIERS (FRENCH)— Arrive with artillery to protect the fleeing French right wing (Helmuth)	39
--	----

HABONVILLE— Occupied by advance guard of Guard Corps (Helmuth) 8, (18th of August)	243
---	-----

HEDGE ROAD— Captured by Regiment Königin at 6.30 p.m. (18th of August)	296
Charges against (Helmuth) 16	17
French position on, captured by Regiment Königin (18th of August)	288

HESSIAN GUARD JAEGERs— Succored on Amanvillers ridge by Kaiser Alexander Regiment (Helmuth)	31
--	----

JAUMONT FOREST AND QUARRIES— Fight at and capture of by the Saxons (18th of August) 356	357
--	-----

JERUSALEM— Assaulted and taken by remnants of Queen Augusta and Kaiser Franz Regiments (Helmuth)	37
---	----

KAISER ALEXANDER REGIMENT— Charge on ridge at Amanvillers (Helmuth)	29
Succors Hessian Jägers on Amanvillers ridge (Helmuth)	31

KAISER FRANZ REGIMENT— Attack of, diverted to Ste. Marie—St. Privat road (18th of August)	290
Charge against ridge south of St. Privat (Helmuth)	15
Location at 6 p.m. (18th of August)	292

KING JOHN REGIMENT— Engaged northwest of St. Privat (Helmuth) ..	36
---	----

KÖNIGIN REGIMENT— Captures hedge road at 6.30 p.m. (18th of August)	296
--	-----

LADMIRAULT, GENERAL—Attempts, with his last forces, three charges against the combined German artillery line (Helmuth)	40
LEFT (GERMAN) WING—Precarious situation of (Helmuth)	29
Reinforced by 4th Guard Regiment (Helmuth)	26
LOCATION OF ARMY CORPS—Morning of August 18th (Goltz) 47, (Boguslawski)	115
At 10 a.m. (Goltz)	59
At 10.30 a.m. (18th of August)	222
Between 2 and 3 p.m. (Goltz)	68
At 5 p.m. (18th of August)	270
Twelfth Corps after capture of St. Privat in bivouacs (Schimpff) note	213
LOCATION OF TROOPS—First Guard Infantry Brigade at 5.30 p.m. (18th of August)	299
French 6th Corps at 7 p.m. (18th of August)	351
Guard divisions at 5 p.m. (Schimpff)	192
Saxons in bivouac night of 18th (Schimpff) note	213
LOSSES—Total losses of French and Germans (Boguslawski) 127, (Goltz) 82, (Helmuth) 42, (Wittich)	88
MANSTEIN, GENERAL—Captures heights of Amanvillers (Helmuth)	6
Opens battle at Vernéville (Helmuth)	5
Orders fight on Amanvillers ridge be broken off (Helmuth)	34
MARS LA TOUR—Account of march crossing at (Boguslawski) 118, (Helmuth)	3
Halt of Guard Corps at (Helmuth)	5
Meeting of Guard and XIIth Corps at (Helmuth) 3, (Boguslawski)	118
METZ—THIONVILLE RAILROAD—Destruction of by Saxon Guard Cavalry (Klenck)	113
MEASURES TAKEN BY CORPS COMMANDERS anticipating Prince Frederick Charles' orders (18th of August)	230
V. MOLTKE, GENERAL—Change of estimate of situation between 9 and 10 a.m. (Haake)	348
Operation orders for August 18th (Helmuth) 2, Goltz	46
Orders of 10.30 a.m. to Second Army to attack from direction of Amanweiler (Haake)	438
V. MONTBÉ, COLONEL—Blamed for insufficient independence (Haake)	450
MONTIGNY LA GRANGE—French evacuate position west of (18th of August)	340
MONTOIS LA MONTAGNE—Forty-eighth Brigade marches on (18th of August)	265
Found unoccupied by Saxons (Boguslawski)	122
Saxon enveloping column arrives at (Helmuth) 34, (Goltz)	75
NINTH ARMY CORPS—Arrives at Caulre Ferme at 8.30 a.m. and halts there (Goltz)	50

NINTH ARMY CORPS—(continued)

Assumes the offensive and attacks Amanvillers (Goltz)	79-80
Enters battle at Vernéville (Goltz)	67
Leaves Caulre Ferme at 10.30 a.m. (Goltz)	64
Ordered to halt at Caulre Ferme (Goltz)	54
Ordered to march on Vernéville (Goltz) 58, (Hodenberg)	133
Receives orders to march to La Folie and attack enemy with artillery (18th of August)	226
OPERATION ORDERS—Royal Headquarters for August 18th (Hel-	
muth) 2, (Goltz)	46
For IId Army for the 18th (Goltz) 45, (Hodenberg)	130
V. PAPE, GENERAL—Closes gap between 1st and 4th Brigade with	
2d Guard Regiment (Helmuth)	23
Convinced that Ste. Marie must be taken and issues orders therefor (18th of August)	243
Dispute with Prince August as to commencement of attack (18th of August)	299
Enters St. Privat and takes measures to secure that place (Helmuth)	41
Estimate of the situation about 5 p.m. (18th of August)	297
Estimate of the situation at 7 p.m. (18th of August)	325
Gives signal for final assault on St. Privat at 7.30 p.m. (Hel- muth) 36, (18th of August)	364
Orders 4th Guard Regiment to support 1st Guard Brigade at 6.30 p.m. (18th of August)	321
Perceives that attack on Amanvillers from Habonville is im- practicable (Boguslawski)	120
Praises Saxon assault on St. Privat (Haake) ¹	459
Report of attack on Ste. Marie (Haake)	459
Reports capture of Ste. Marie at 2.30 p.m. (Goltz)	70
Sees enemy at Ste. Marie and St. Privat from Habonville (18th of August)	239
PAUSE IN BATTLE—Occurs between 4 and 5 p.m. (Helmuth) 12,	
(Goltz) 71, (Schimpff)	193
POINT DU JOUR—Captured and held by Ist Army (Helmuth)	6
PRINCE AUGUST OF WUERTEMBERG—Decides to attack St. Privat	
(Goltz)	73
Declines offer of artillery of Xth Corps to prepare attack on St. Privat (Leipziger Zeitung)	386
Dispute with General von Pape as to commencement of attack (18th of August)	299
Does not obey orders from Prince Frederick Charles of 10 a.m. to the letter (Hohenlohe)	93
Estimate of the situation between 5 and 6 p.m. (Goltz)	71-72
Estimate of the situation at 7 p.m. (18th of August)	326
His reasons for starting attack on St. Privat at 5 p.m. (Bogus- lawski)	122

PRINCE AUGUST OF WUERTEMBERG—(continued)

Issues orders for the attack on St. Privat (Helmuth)	14
Gives orders for final assault on St. Privat (Helmuth)	36
Reasons inducing him to order the attack on St. Privat (Helmuth)	13-14

PRINCE FREDERICK CHARLES—Arrives at Habonville at 2.15 p.m. (18th of August)

Arrives at Mars la Tour at 5 a.m. (Goltz)	48
Assembles all commanding generals to receive verbal orders at 5 a.m. August 18th (Goltz)	46
Criticism of his estimate of the situation (Leipziger Zeitung)	382
Decides to start attack on Ste. Marie at 3.45 p.m. (18th of August)	245
Desire to have the Guards between the Saxons and Hessians (Haake)	430
Directions to commanding generals of his five army corps morning of August 18th (Haake)	427
Directions to 9th, Guard, and 12th Corps at 10 a.m. (Haake)	437
Directs 10th Army Corps to support advance of the Guard Corps on St. Privat (Goltz)	75
Directs 12th Corps commander to send a brigade to Woippy (Goltz)	77
Dispositions for the advance of the 1st Army August 18th (18th of August)	215
Estimate of the general situation (Goltz)	48
Estimate of the situation between 5 and 6 p.m. (Goltz)	73
Estimate of worth of Saxons (Haake)	428
Explains his estimate of the situation to the corps commanders (Goltz)	50
His intentions to attack on the 18th (Goltz)	45
His dispositions to open battle (Boguslawski)	119
Inspects battlefield from Habonville (18th of August)	344
Instructions, at Mars la Tour, to II ^d Army governing advance along Metz—Etain road (Schimpff)	157
Issues attack orders to 12th, Guard, 9th, 10th and 2d Army Corps at 11.30 and 12 noon (Goltz)	63-64
Issues march orders to II ^d Army at 5 a.m. (Goltz)	49
Issues orders at 12.30 p.m. to 3d Army Corps to start (Goltz)	65
Operation orders for August 18th (Goltz) 45, (Hodenberg)	130
Orders Crown Prince of Saxony to have his cavalry destroy Metz—Thionville railroad and telegraph (Goltz)	70
Orders Guard artillery to prolong artillery line of 9th Corps (Goltz)	66
Orders to Guard Corps, dated 10.15, to march on Vernéville (Goltz) 58; at 10 a.m. (Hohenlohe)	93
Orders to Guard Corps, dated 10.15 a.m., to support IXth Corps (18th of August)	226
Orders to 9th Army Corps to halt at Caulre Ferme (Goltz)	54

PRINCE FREDERICK CHARLES—(continued)

Orders to 9th Army Corps dated 10 a.m. (18th of August)	226
Orders to 9th Army Corps to march on Vernéville (Goltz)	58
Orders to Guard Corps at 11.30 a.m. (Haake)	438
Orders to IId Army for August 18th (18th of August)	215
Orders, at 6.40 p.m., to 12th Corps to send one brigade at least to Woippy (18th of August)	328
Orders to IId Army at 8.30 p.m. (Goltz)	81
Partiality to Guard Corps (Haake)	428
Proceeds to the battlefield (18th of August)	234
Proceeds to Doncourt 8.30 p.m. (Goltz) 81, (18th of August) ...	345
Proceeds to west of Habonville shortly after 2 p.m. (Goltz) ...	66
Proceeds to IXth Army Corps at 6.30 p.m. (18th of August) ...	327
Reports start of IId Army at 5 a.m. to Royal Headquarters (Goltz)	50
Report of, to Royal Headquarters, dated 6.15 a.m. (18th of August)	222
Report to Royal Headquarters dated Vionville, 10.10 a.m. (18th of August) note	228
Takes position west of Vernéville at 1.45 p.m. (Goltz)	65

PRINCE GEORGE OF SAXONY—Independent decision to advance on

Ste. Marie aux Chênes (Schimpff) 166, (Schubert)	409
Measures for occupying woods at Roncourt (Haake)	451
Official report of attack by 23d Division on St. Privat (Haake) ..	457
Official report of march on and attack of Ste. Marie (Haake) ..	443
Orders general advance against St. Privat at 6.30 p.m. (Hoden- berg)	144
Reaches Montois with enveloping column toward 7 p.m. (Hel- muth)	34
Receives General Voigts-Rhetz's orders at 10 p.m. to have his command at Tronville at daybreak (Hodenberg)	135

QUEEN AUGUSTA REGIMENT—Charge against ridge south of
St. Privat (Helmuth) 15

Charge on ridge at Amanvillers (Helmuth)	29
--	----

QUEEN ELIZABETH REGIMENT—Second Battalion led by Colonel
Bernhardi to final assault against Amanvillers ridge (Hel-
muth)

	33
--	----

RECONNAISSANCE—Bad consequences of failure of sufficient prior
to battle (Leipziger Zeitung)

	375
--	-----

RENEWAL OF BATTLE at 7.30 p.m. (Helmuth)

	33
--	----

V. RÖDER, COLONEL—Killed northwest of St. Privat (Helmuth) ...

	36
--	----

RONCOURT—German left wing contained at (18th of August)

	352
--	-----

Occupied by French (Shimpff)	188
------------------------------------	-----

Saxons attack and take Roncourt at 6.30 p.m. (Helmuth) 34, (Goltz) 75, (Boguslawski) 122, (Schimpff) 197, (18th of August) 355, (Shubert)	414
---	-----

Twelfth Corps concentrated at (Hodenberg)	143
---	-----

Twelfth Corps moves on (Schimpff)	185
---	-----

ROYAL HEADQUARTERS—Concludes hostile main force to be in front of Metz (Goltz)	53
Conduct up to the opening of the battle (18th of August)	237
Directs that general attack will not be made until material forces can advance from Amanvillers	67
Lack of communication between it and different army headquarters (Leipziger Zeitung)	375
Orders for the general attack, dated 10.30 a.m. (Goltz)	61
Orders Guard and 12th Corps to attack Ste. Marie from Amanvillers (Goltz)	61
Orders to Ist Army dated 12 noon (18th of August)	237
Orders to IIId Army dated 1.45 p.m. (18th of August)	238
Proceeds from Pont à Mousson to Flavigny (18th of August)	222
ST. AIL—Guard Fusiliers gain it ahead of the enemy (Helmuth)	9
STE. MARIE AUX CHÊNES—Attack on by Guard and Saxons (Helmuth) 9, 10, 11, (Hodenberg)	138
Account of battle at (Schimpff)	173
Artillery of Guard and XIIth Corps prepares attack on (18th of August)	250
Battle ceases toward 4 p.m. (18th of August)	260
Battles north and east of (18th of August)	256
Captured by Guard and XIIth Corps at 3.30 p.m. (Helmuth) 11, (Goltz) 70, (Hohenlohe) 95, (Boguslawski) 120, (Hodenberg) 138, (Schimpff) 178, (18th of August) 253, (Schubert) 411	411
Description of battlefield (Schimpff)	167
First Guard Division storms south front of (18th of August)	253
Forty-seventh Infantry Brigade assaults west side of (18th of August)	255
Found free of the enemy at 12.30 p.m. (Hodenberg)	137
Guard Corps reports it occupied by French (Goltz)	65
Measures of the French to defeat attack on (18th of August)	252
Occupied by the French at 1 p.m. (Boguslawski) 120, (Hodenberg)	138
Opening of attack against (Goltz)	69
Positions of batteries in action at (Schimpff)	189
Report by General von Pape of attack on (Haake)	459
Report of 24th Division of march on and attack of (Haake)	440
Reported occupied by enemy by Captain Groeben (18th of August)	231
ST. HUBERT—Captured and held by Ist Army (Helmuth)	6
ST. PRIVAT—Artillery opens fire on (18th of August)	269
Assault on by Saxons (Schimpff) 203, (Schubert)	415
Attack of the Guard Corps on (18th of August)	270
Attack on by Saxons (Hodenberg) 144, (Schimpff)	200
Capture of by Guard and XIIth Corps (Schimpff)	206
Commencement of attack on (Helmuth)	14
Captured at 7.30 p.m. (Hodenberg)	145

ST. PRIVAT (continued)

Description of the battlefield (18th of August) 278, (Schimpff)	410
167, (Schubert)	
Description of French position at (Schimpff) note	157
Final assault on, 7.45 p.m. (Helmuth) 36, (18th of August)	363
Forces holding, at 6 p.m. (Schimpff)	196
Fourth Guard Brigade's attack on (18th of August)	280
French evacuate the advanced positions west of St. Privat (18th of August)	311
General course of attack on (Boguslawski)	123
General description of (Helmuth)	8
General plan of battle (Helmuth)	5
Guard Corps reports it occupied by French (Goltz)	65
Hand to hand struggle in (Helmuth)	39
Movement of troops on French right wing during battle at Ste. Marie (18th of August)	261
Official report of Prince George of Saxony of attack on (Haake)	457
Position of defenders at 5.30 p.m. (18th of August)	301
Preparations for the assault on (18th of August)	359
Prince August's reasons for attacking at 5 p.m. (Boguslawski)	122
Reported occupied by enemy by Captain Groeben (18th of August)	231
Report of French camp at reaches Prince Frederick Charles (Boguslawski)	119
Shot into flames by entire Saxon artillery at 7.35 p.m. (Hel- muth)	36
Situation in, shortly before the assault (18th of August)	358
Sixth Corps concentrated in and around (Schimpff)	195
Stormed by Guard and 12th Army Corps (Goltz) 79, (Hodenberg)	145
SAXON ARTILLERY—Appears west of Ste. Marie aux Chênes and opens fire (Helmuth) 10, (Hodenberg)	139
Entire artillery joins Guard batteries in bombarding St. Privat (Helmuth)	36
Fires on Ste. Marie (Goltz)	69
Location at 5 p.m. (18th of August)	305
Prepares attack on Ste. Marie (18th of August)	250
Supports attack of 1st Guard Infantry Brigade (18th of August)	305
Takes up second position north of Ste. Marie (Goltz)	71
SAXON GUARD CAVALRY—Destroys railroad and telegraph between Metz and Thionville (Klenck)	103
SAXON (12th) ARMY CORPS—Account of march, morning of the 18th (Haake)	432
Advance along Metz—Etain road (Schimpff)	157
Advance guard, composition of (Schimpff)	160
Advance guard reaches the Metz—Verdun road at 8.30 a.m. (Goltz) 50, (Schimpff)	160
Arrives at Jarny at 8.50 a.m. (Goltz)	54

SAXON (12th) ARMY CORPS (continued)

Arrives at Mars la Tour at 1 p.m. (Schimpff)	153
Arrives at Ste. Marie (18th of August)	247
Bivouac places of units after the battle (Schimpff) note	213
Completes enveloping movement (18th of August)	346
Concentrated at Roncourt (Hodenberg)	143
Conflicting reports of time of starting from Mars la Tour on the 18th (Haake)	468
Defense of charge of slowness in movements August 18th (Haake)	434
Delayed at Mars la Tour (18th of August)	220
Description of outpost position at Mars la Tour (Schimpff) note	154
Discussion as to slowness in enveloping movement (Haake)	449-450
Forty-seventh Brigade assaults Ste. Marie (18th of August)	225
Location of individual parts at 5.15 p.m. (Goltz) Note 1	72
March dispositions at 11.30 a.m. (Hodenberg)	133
March dispositions at 2 p.m. (Hodenberg)	137
March of on August 18th (Hodenberg)	130
March on Jarney (18th of August)	217
March on Ste. Marie (18th of August)	233
March to the battlefield (Schimpff)	163
March to Roncourt (Schimpff)	185
Movements on August 16th and 17th (Haake)	423
Operations of left wing (Hodenberg)	140
Ordered to attack Ste. Marie from Amanvillers (Goltz)	61
Ordered to halt at Jarny (Goltz)	54
Ordered to march on Ste. Marie at 11.30 a.m. (Hodenberg)	134
Order of march toward Ste. Marie (18th of August) note	233
Positions of separate parts of at 5 p.m. (Schimpff)	191
Preliminary arrangements of, for the battle (Schimpff)	163
Reaches Montois la Montagne at 6 p.m. (Goltz)	75
Reports enemy in position at Ste. Marie and its advance against that point (Goltz)	65
Reports enemy at Valleroy at 8.50 a.m. and corrects that report at 9.30 a.m. (Goltz)	54-55
Reports enemy west of Valleroy (Goltz)	54
Reports its attack on Ste. Marie at 2.30 p.m. (Goltz)	69
Reports Valleroy unoccupied (Goltz)	55
Starts enveloping movement at 5 p.m. (Helmuth)	13
Starts from Mars la Tour at 7 a.m. (Boguslawski)	117
Starts from Pont à Mousson at 3 a.m. (Schimpff)	151
Starts march on Jarny (Goltz)	50
Turns against St. Privat (Boguslawski) 126, (Hodenberg)	144

SCHWEIDNITZ, Lieut.-Colonel, 107th Regiment—Killed on ridge near St. Privat (Helmuth)	35
V. SCHUBERT, Lieut.-Colonel—Translation of field notes from photographic reproduction (Schubert)	420

SECOND ARMY—Consideration of manner of advance on the 18th (Boguslawski)	117
Directs 9th Corps to delay its attack (Boguslawski)	119
Dispositions for its advance on August 18th (18th of August)	215
Dispositions for attack (11.30 a.m.) (Boguslawski)	119
Events up to 5 p.m. (18th of August)	239
Events up to the close of the battle (18th of August) 329	344
Final orders on the 18th at 8.30 p.m. (Hodenberg)	148
Great right turn started by Prince Frederick Charles (Helmuth)	4
Headquarters arrives at Habonville at 2.15 p.m. (18th of August)	244
Headquarters arrives on battlefield (18th of August)	240
Location of various parts morning of the 18th (Goltz) 47, (Boguslawski)	115
Location of army corps at 10 a.m. (Goltz)	59
Location of army corps at 10.30 a.m. (18th of August)	222
Location of army corps between 2 and 3 p.m. (Goltz)	68
Losses on August 18th (Goltz)	82
March directions August 18th (Boguslawski)	117
Measures taken by up to noon (18th of August)	228
Orders to Guard Corps at 10.15 a.m. (Hodenberg)	133
Orders to 9th Corps at 10 a.m. (Hodenberg)	133
Orders to XIIth Corps dated 12 noon (Schimpff)	162
Reaches the line Caulre—Doncourt—Jarny at 10.30 a.m. (18th of August)	222
Review of the situation of the 2d Army up to 5 p.m. (18th of August)	270
Strength in battle on August 18th (Schimpff)	157
SECOND ARMY CORPS—Comes to relief of 1st Army at St. Hubert and Point du Jour (Helmuth)	6
Enters battle on right wing of German line of battle (Goltz) 80,	81
SECOND GUARD DIVISION—Order of march on La Folie (18th of August) note	232
Starts from Doncourt to La Folie to attack enemy (18th of August)	232
SECOND GUARD REGIMENT—Charges ridge south of St. Privat from Ste. Marie (Helmuth)	23
Closes gap between 1st and 4th Brigades (Helmuth) 23, (18th of August)	318
SIXTH (FRENCH) ARMY CORPS—Casualties of, August 16th (Schimpff)	168
Positions of at 1 p.m., August 18th (Schimpff)	171
Position of troops defending St. Privat at 7 p.m. (18th of August)	351
STEINMETZ, GENERAL—Criticism of conduct of (Leipziger Zeitung)	383
SUNKEN ROAD OF AMANVILLERS RIDGE—Fight raging in (Helmuth)	30
General Wittich's charges against (Helmuth)	32
TENTH ARMY CORPS—Ordered to halt at Bruville, 8.35 a.m. (Goltz)	54
Ordered to support advance of Guard Corps on St. Privat (Goltz)	75

TENTH ARMY CORPS (continued)	
Ordered to turn against St. Privat (Goltz).....	66
Reaches Batilly at 2.30 p.m. (Boguslawski).....	127
Reports arrival in Jouaville at 2.05 p.m. (Goltz).....	66
Receives orders at 6 p.m. to advance on St. Ail (Boguslawski)	127
THIRD ARMY CORPS—Ordered to start at 12.30 p.m. (Goltz).....	65
THIRD GUARD BRIGADE—Attacks ridge at Amanvillers (Helmuth)	
29, (18th of August).....	329
Captures hostile position at Amanweiler (18th of August).....	337
Directed by IXth Army Corps to take position south of Habonville (18th of August).....	269
Placed at disposal of IXth Army Corps (18th of August) 268, ..	269
TWELFTH CAVALRY DIVISION—Account of march from Mars la	
Tour to Metz—Etain road (Schimpff).....	156
Arrives at Puxe at 11 a.m. (Schimpff).....	162
Movements of between August 16th-18th (Hodenberg.....)	134
Ordered to start at 4 a.m., August 17th, toward the Metz—Etain road (Haake).....	424
TWENTY-FIFTH (HESSE) DIVISION—In bivouac north of Gorze,	
August 17th (Wittich).....	83
March to Habonville (18th of August).....	239
Operations on August 18th (Wittich).....	83- 88
Starts for Vern��ville at 11.30 a.m. (Wittich).....	84
TWENTY-FOURTH DIVISION, XIIITH CORPS—Arrives at Chateau	
Moncel at 10 a.m. (Schimpff).....	151
Official report of march on and attack of Ste. Marie (Haake)...	440
TWENTY-THIRD DIVISION, XIIITH CORPS - Arrives at Jarny at 9 a.m.	
(Schimpff).....	161
At Delme August 15th as strategic reserve (Schubert).....	401
Attacks Roncourt (Schubert).....	414
Attacks St. Privat (Schubert).....	415
Casualties August 18th (Schubert).....	416
March from Mars la Tour to battlefield (Schubert).....	406
March to Mars la Tour (Schubert).....	404
March to Nomeny (Schubert).....	401
Receives orders at 2.45 to start enveloping movement (Schubert)	411
VALLEROY—Reported unoccupied by 12th Army Corps (Goltz)....	55
VERNEVILLE—First cannon shots at, at 12 noon (Goltz).....	64
General Manstein opens battle at with artillery (Helmuth)....	5
Ninth Army Corps enters battle at (Goltz).....	64
VOIGTS-RHETZ, GENERAL—Letter to commanders to have all	
available forces appear at Tronville at daylight the 18th	
(Hodenberg).....	135
WAR DIARY—Colonel von Schubert's diary (Schubert).....	420
First Squadron, Royal Saxon Guard Cavalry Regiment (Klenck)	103
WITTICH, MAJOR—Killed south of St. Privat (Helmuth).....	15
V. WITTICH, MAJOR GENERAL—Diary.....	83

GERMAN GENERAL STAFF MAP ACCOMPANYING
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